8 PLATINUM POP MIXING TIPS!

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Propellerhead Record The Un-DAW

Big Fish Symphonic Manoeuvres

Jonathan Sadoff thenewno2

TORI AMOS

Reinventing Holiday Classics
Channeling Zeppelin with a Wurly
Production Tips for Piano *and* Orchestra

CHOPS CLINICS!

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Gliss Like Jerry Lee Lewis
Minor Scale Master Class

Gig Advice From
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The Black Hollies
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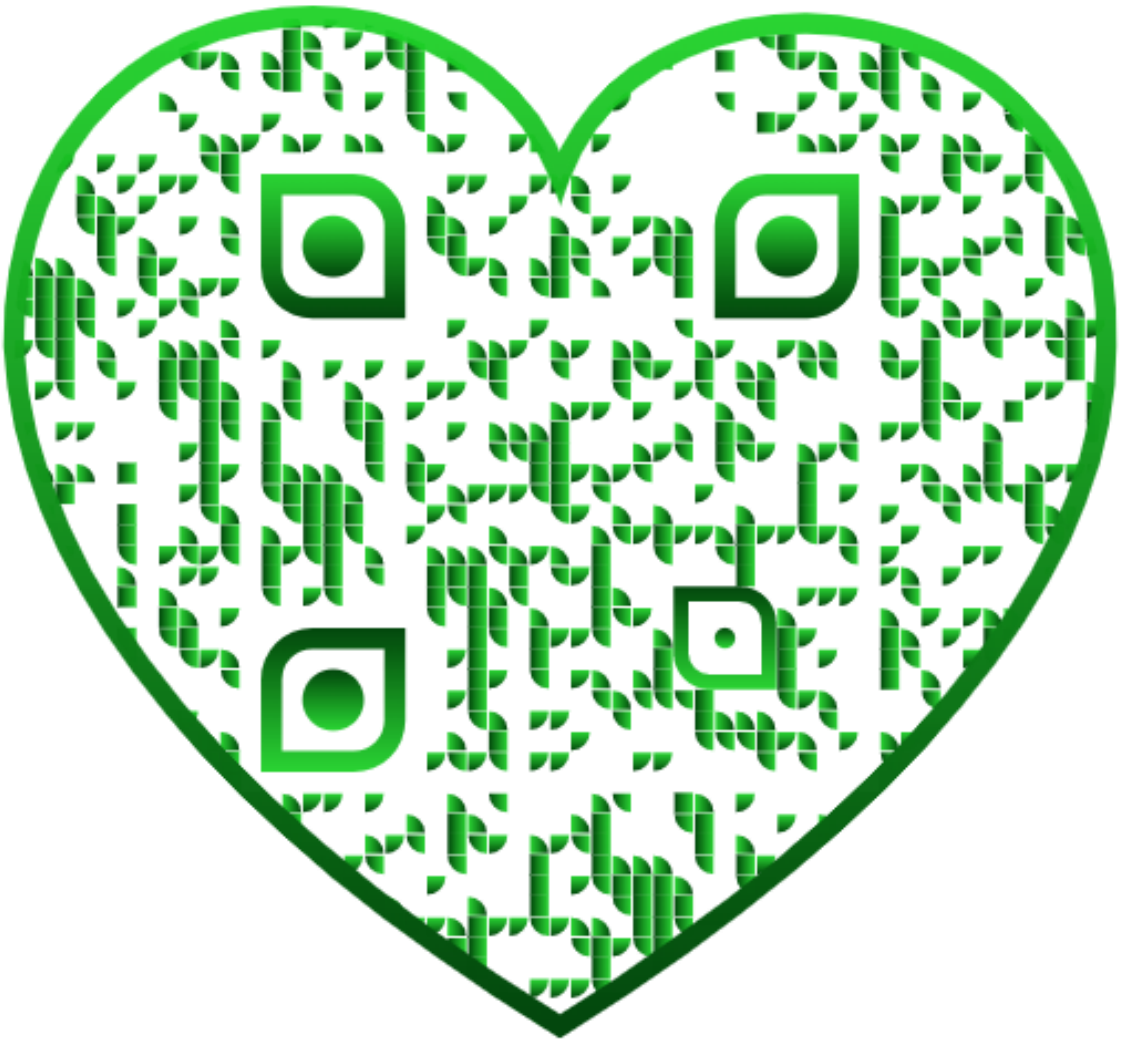
A NEWBAY MEDIA PUBLICATION
DECEMBER 2009



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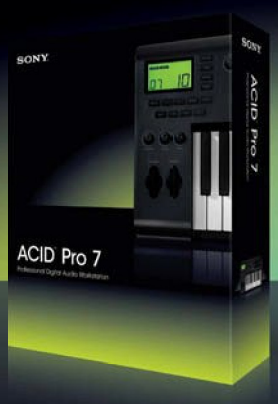

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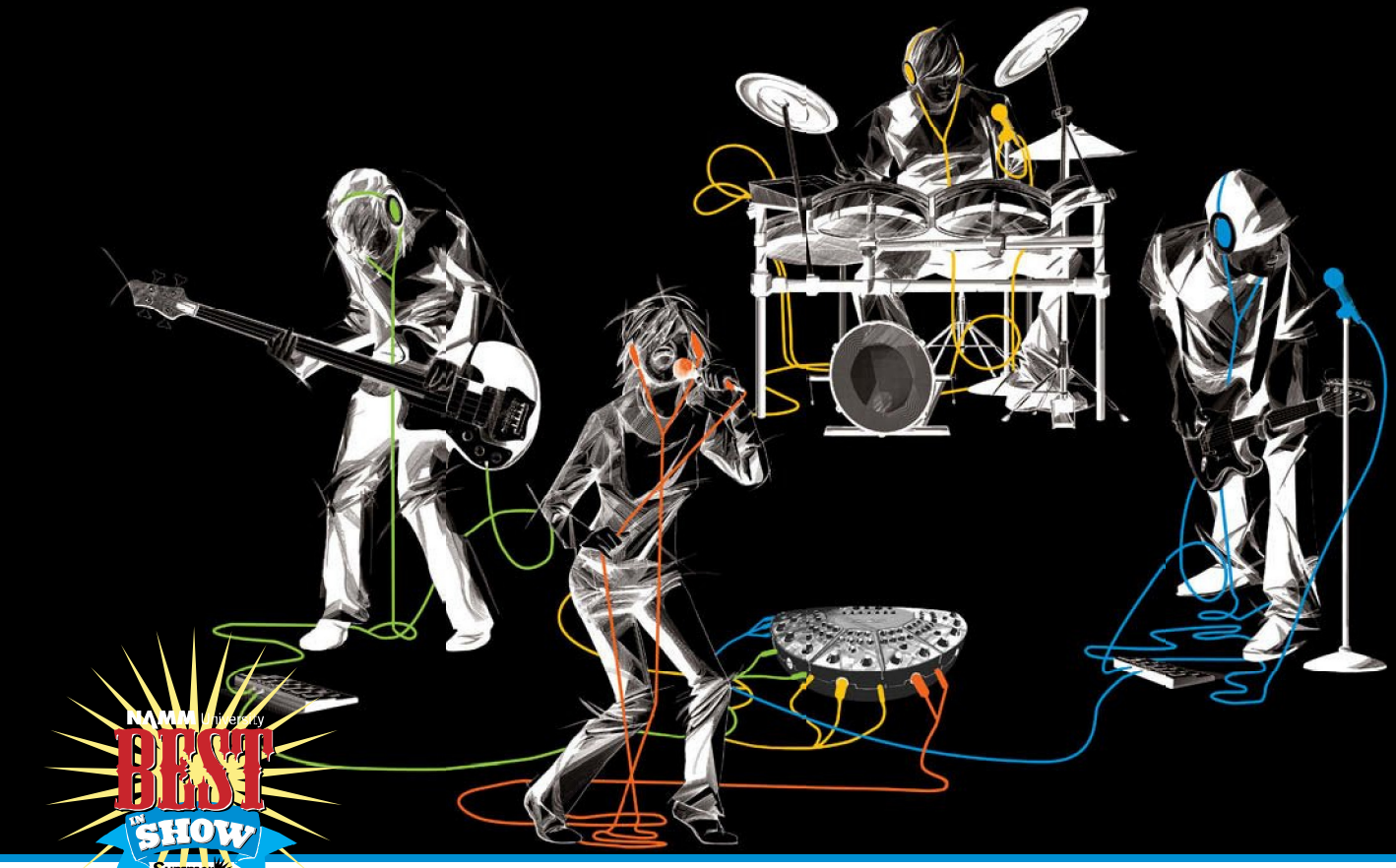

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12 ARTISTS
SPENCER DAY
CORN MO
MUZIKJUNKI
THE BLACK HOLLIES
UNSIGNED ARTIST OF THE MONTH
ADVICE
SESSION SENSEI
CAREER COUNSELOR
COMMUNITY
CD REVIEWS
GO SEE
WEEKEND WARRIOR

KAREN COLLINS

FEATURES

26 TORI AMOS
The alternative piano goddess returns with . . . a holiday album? Learn how she reinvented classic carols by diving deep into their roots on *Midwinter Graces*.

32 ROAD WARRIOR: JONATHAN SADOFF
Find out how this multi-talented composer and keyboardist landed a sweet gig with Dhani Harrison's thenewno2 – and why his bandmates call him a "Swiss Army knife."

PLAY IT!

38 CLASSIC COVER
Learn Michael Jackson's irresistible **"Billie Jean"** groove.
40 ROCK
Discover how – and when – to use **piano glissandi**.
42 JAZZ
Minor scales are everywhere. Master them here.

DO IT!

44 DANCE MIX
Learn to craft the **kick drum sound** that's perfect for your mix.
46 SOFT SYNTHS
Get the synth lead for **Daft Punk's "Da Funk."**
48 MIXING
Platinum plug-in tips from producer **Juan Patino**.
50 PRODUCTION
The quick-and-dirty on **modular patching in Reason**.

GEAR

52 KORG SV-1
58 PROPELLERHEAD RECORD
62 GALBANUM *ABSTRACTION 04*
62 BIG FISH AUDIO *SYMPHONIC MANOEUVRES 2*

LINKS

8 FROM THE EDITOR
10 LETTERS
20 NEW GEAR
64 PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT
65 CLASSIFIED ADS

MORE ON THE WEB

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PIANO MIKING TIPS FROM FANTASY STUDIOS
Senior Editor Michael Gallant grills recording engineer Jesse Nichols at the legendary Berkeley, California, studio about how the big boys do it, and how you can adapt the techniques to your own session.

SPENCER DAY EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW
What's the "money chord"? Learn this, how to play piano and sing at the same time, and other insights from the rising-star piano man in these videos.

GEEK OUT

66 Last month, we interviewed **Crystal Method**. This month, we get the goods on their synth freak's dream of a studio.

Stephen Fortner
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Face Time

As I write this, I just got back from the 127th Audio Engineering Society convention – AES to its friends. Each year, it switches between New York City and San Francisco. This year was New York's turn, and music technology industry pessimists (sometimes that's redundant) had predicted a dead show with tumbleweeds rolling through the aisles and knuckles dragging on the carpet. Fine, so a lot of instrument and audio companies have pulled back on trade shows in these lean economic times. On top of renting exhibit space, putting up your crew of 20, or even three or four, at Manhattan hotel rates is nothing to be taken lightly – as I'll surely be reminded when I turn in my expense report. Given that any trade show is mainly an investment in "face time," and given that tracking the return on that investment is a far more subjective matter than counting the clicks on your web banner ads, it's understandable that any company would wonder, "Do we *really* need to do this?"

Even taking all that into account, the pessimists were all wrong about AES this year. True, the number of exhibitors was respectable but compact: 321 in total. But that's where any sense of smallness ended. First of all, foot traffic was dense and relentless. There's a saying that every trade show goes one day longer than it should, and AES' fourth and last day fell, somewhat unusually, on a Monday. "It's gonna be a ghost town come Monday," I heard many attendees say, and I expected this myself. Not true – I had to keep appointments and shoot videos of all the cool new gear (you can find many of them at keyboardmag.com/blogs), and Monday found me quarterbacking through enthusiastic crowds just as much as over the weekend. It felt more like NAMM.

More importantly, some companies' scaling back was an unintended boon for others. Some of the big, usual suspects – Digidesign and TC among them – did sit AES out, saving it up for NAMM. Larger-sized exhibitors – such as Korg, Mackie, TASCAM, and American Music and Sound (distributor for Novation, Focusrite, Nord, and Kurzweil, to name a few) – cut costs by renting the same smallish booths as everyone else. (As an aside, I was gratified that in a show known for big mixers and boutique mics, one of the biggest attention-getters was a *keyboard*: Korg's SV-1, reviewed on page 52).

What this meant was that that startups and mom 'n' pops, for once, weren't living in the shadows of the battlestar booths of the big companies. So, they got a lot more attention from the journalists, famous engineers, buyers for retail chains, and assorted audio pros that make up AES' attendance. It was good for the big boys, too: They got to not just seem but *be* more accessible, and their people got to interact with mad-scientist-making-an-amazing-preamp-in-the-garage types more than usual.

Always-cash-strapped music schools and non-profits really shone as well. Among these were Five Towns College (ftc.edu), the Bob Moog Foundation (moogfoundation.org), and the very cool Women's Audio Mission (womensaudiomission.org), which mentors women and school-age girls towards careers in music and pro audio. The next K.K. Proffitt, Leslie Ann Jones, or even Tori Amos may well emerge from there.

Keyboard's takeaway? The cost-conscious approach to AES created a level playing field, which in turn fostered an environment of camaraderie and congeniality. There was a palpable sense that, while healthy competition for our collective holiday gear dollar has its role, working together to evangelize learning, playing, recording, and producing music is more important, because a rising tide lifts all boats.

Especially at this time of year, I can think of no better business model.

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WHERE'S FL STUDIO?

In a recent issue, you requested readers give suggestions and comments, so here are mine. I think *Keyboard* is outstanding – basically everything I could want in one magazine. Old-school jazz masters, obscure electro kids, pop stars, I love it all. Likewise, the articles on everything from jazz theory to synth programming are fantastic. The only thing I haven't seen yet, and I've been subscribed for several months now, is any tutorial articles where the DAW used is [Image-Line] FL Studio. I've seen lots of Reason and Ableton Live, but no FL Studio. I have wondered if this is because they sell less units than others, because of their reputation as a hip-hop DAW focused on sampling, or just the result of a poor image due to the unfortunate name "Fruity Loops." Whatever the reason, FL Studio is a good DAW that's always improving while the price stays affordable, so it has a certain appeal. The other minor suggestion I have is if you haven't done an issue with Kissy Sell Out – if not for the cover, at least get a tutorial and transcription for the synth solo in "Harriet." That'd be the best. Keep up the good work. Subscribing to *Keyboard* was the best twelve bucks I ever spent!

–Chris Liebl

Chris, thanks a ton. We try to squeeze a variety of styles, applications, and ability levels into each month. Sometimes, that only proves we can't please everyone, so hearing from a reader like you, who finds value in every sort of article we do, is a major compliment. As to FL Studio, there's no intention to cover it less than we cover other software, and we agree that it's an excellent program, especially for the money. Longtime Keyboard *guru Jim Aikin is a huge fan, and is working on an upcoming review of FL Studio 9, so we'll hit him up for tutorials as well. We're also planning a giveaway of FL Studio 9 to coincide with the review, so watch keyboardmag.com, or our MySpace, Facebook, or Twitter pages for details. We'll check out Kissy Sell Out, and if you like electronica, we have interviews on the way with Deadmau5, Adam Freeland, and Scott Hardkiss, so stay tuned!*

–Stephen Fortner, Executive Editor

RETAIL RESPECT

As a longtime subscriber and player, I wish you'd cover the issue of how to make an intelligent decision about what keyboard to buy next, given that it's now almost impossible to find one to actually play. When I do find one in a store to try, I feel as if I've shoplifted the free experience they've provided, because they and I both know I can buy it for less from one of the online catalogs. Frankly, I'd gladly pay a store $100 for the privilege of sitting there and playing for an hour so I actually knew how the keyboard felt before I bought it, even if I ended up buying it online. What do others do? Any suggestions?

–Douglas King

Doug, folks who work in local and regional music stores could tell you how many others don't feel your ethical qualms about taking up an afternoon of their time with questions and comparisons, then buying at a higher-volume competitor that can afford to play the "meet or beat" price game, often over a difference of $100 or less. In fact, that's why well-stocked keyboard rooms are so hard to find in non-chain stores these days – guitars, amps, and drums usually have higher margins, and are almost always a less time- and tech-intensive sell, so they get more floor space. Our advice: Either you will find a keyboard you want to try in a store near you, or you won't. If you do, then factor that $100 into your price tolerance to buy it from that same store. If you don't, better online retailers have 30-day "no hassle" return policies, precisely so you can do real work with a new axe to decide if it's for you. Always prioritize this policy, and well-trained salespeople, above any "low price guarantee."

–Stephen Fortner, Executive Editor

RUDESS RESPONDS

I was watching a video of Dream Theater, and [keyboardist] Jordan Rudess is a master. He has inspired me to get better at keyboards. I couldn't help noticing that Jordan had what looked like a tablet PC on his keyboard stand, and it looked as though there were music staves on it. If there were, what software does he use, and how does the music keep in sync with what he plays? I have thought about creating PDFs of my sheet music, but can't find a good process to advance the page (and in some cases go backwards) when I'm playing. I thought about a foot pedal that would act like left and right mouse clicks, but can't find anything that works.

–Colin

Hi Colin! What you saw was my FreeHand MusicPad Pro [freehandsystems.com], which I use as the ultimate cheat sheet. It lets me not only see all the musical notation I want, but also lets me make my own notes on the page, highlight passages, add rehearsal markers, and more. It uses a foot pedal to advance the page, or I can tap the screen on either side to go forward or back a page. I take PNG files created from the original PDFs, then import them into the MusicPad software on my computer. That way the files become FreeHand files which the MusicPad unit can display. It'll read different formats, but this is how it works for me and how I've been doing it for a while. The MusicPad has been rock solid on tour after tour.

–Jordan Rudess

LET'S HEAR FROM YOU

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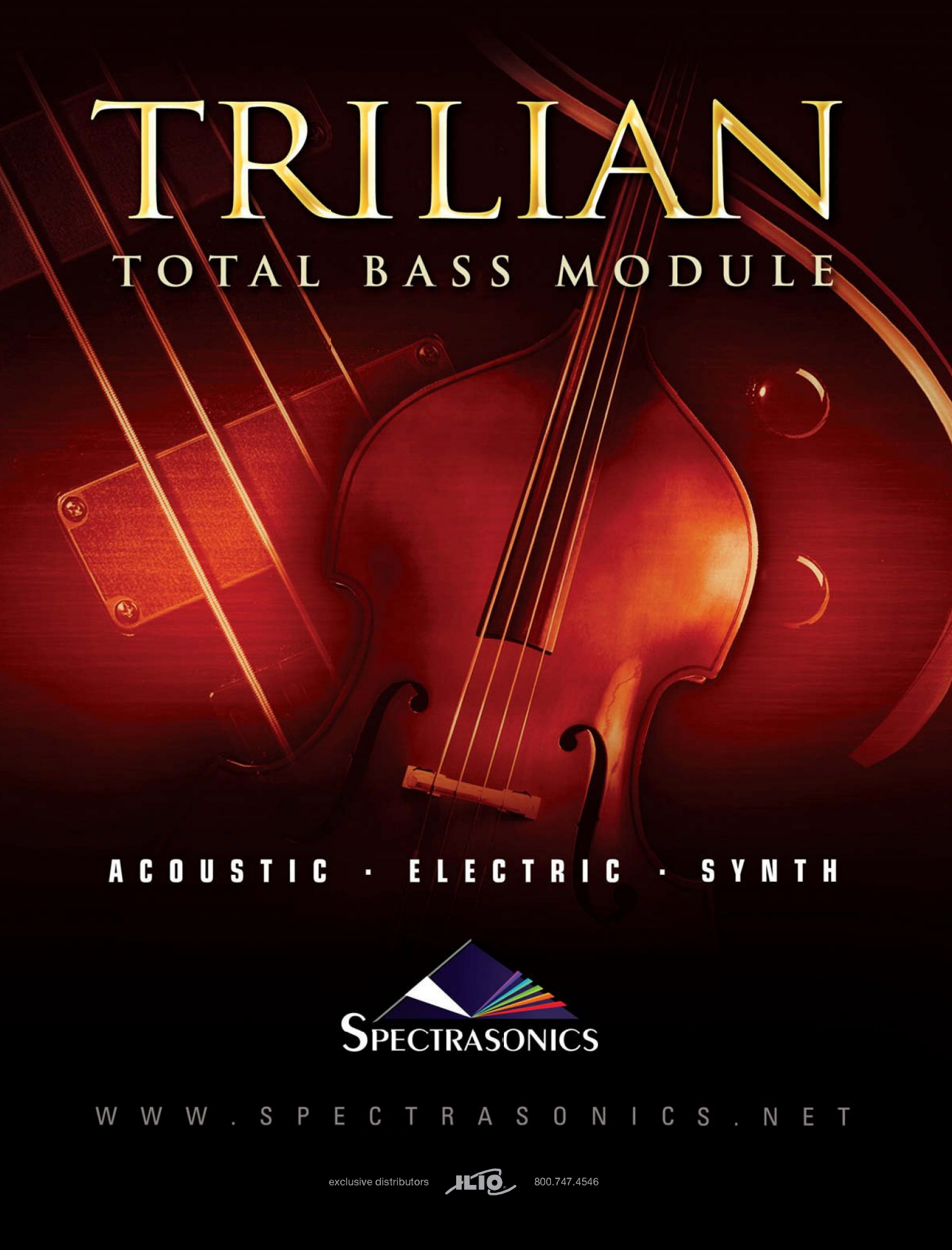
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GREG ALLEN

SPENCER DAY
Lyrical Piano Man

Webpage: spencerday.com
Latest project: *Vagabond* [major-label debut album released on Concord, recorded at Fantasy Studios in Berkeley, California] is about longing and searching for a home. It's a reflection of my experiences in life and love thus far. Although it's eclectic stylistically, it is my hope that it successfully pays homage to all the great music that has inspired me.
Songwriting process: I'll generally start with a melody. I'll hear a pattern that I'm humming over and over again. Often when I'm walking, that's a good place for it to happen. Then I go to the piano, try to lay chords underneath it, and see what interesting contrasts I can create harmonically.
Time pressure and creativity: Deadlines are always a really good motivator for getting things done, so there were probably four or five songs that I hurried up to get finished. I had sketches of ideas, but when I knew we had studio time reserved at Fantasy, which is not cheap, it gave me motivation to get them finished.
Songwriting inspiration: I'll listen to a record I really like and think, what about this works for me? Whether it's Debussy or something else, what appeals to me, harmonically or rhythmically? I'll start riffing on that, and the next thing you know, it's morphed into something completely different.
Playing piano and singing at the same time: It's taken a long time to get to the point where I can feel comfortable [doing both together]. Ballads were the first things I started with, because I could outline the chords, and what I was singing, with the piano. Singers who accompany themselves come up with interesting choices that an accompanist might not hear, and a unique way of framing things.
Songwriting advice: Don't be afraid to talk about personal things. Everyone's life is so interesting and we've all had so many unique experiences. We just need to feel comfortable drawing from those.
For video of Spencer playing and talking music: Visit keyboardmag.com. Michael Gallant

CORN MO
Circus Songs and Glam Rock

For more on Corn Mo (in white), visit cornmo.com.

Before accordionist and keyboardist Corn Mo started Brooklyn glam rock group .357 Lover, he toured with Polyphonic Spree, Ben Folds, and They Might Be Giants – and before that, he got his start singing between sideshow acts at a family circus. In some sense, he never left the circus. His vaudevillian stage instincts, storytelling knack, and appetite for glam rock theatrics have not only earned .357 an ever-expanding following – they've kept Mo on tour, opening for major artists.

What did you take from your circus days into your live act today?
The best thing about touring with a circus was that I would come out to do some songs and I noticed people used that time to go to the bathroom. It made me try harder. I toured with this burlesque group, and I had to follow some hot girl who just took all her clothes off. It forced me to be more entertaining without looking like I was grasping for straws.

Do you have any advice for opening acts about how to disarm their audiences?
I still get nervous before every show, but I think that helps. Respecting the audience is a good idea. [They Might Be Giants'] John Flansburgh told his manager that I was the best opening act ever but I still feel like I have some work to do. Not that I listen to the hecklers, but they give a definite chiseling of where to place things and where to take out things.

What was your big idea for .357 Lover?
I started it in '96. The songs I was doing on my accordion gave a hint that there should be more, so I decided to try it out. It's sort of grown over the years, but still keeps that late '70s, early '80s rock feel.

How do you feel about the comparisons to Meat Loaf?
It depends on why they're saying it, but I'm a big fan of Jim Steinman and Meat Loaf. "Bat out of Hell" is a giant, epic song.

You guys go for epic, high production values but the songs are playful and fun. How do you keep the mood light in the studio while upholding such high production standards?
The best way to record for us is with scratch piano and scratch vocals. Usually, when we record I think we all know what we're going for and we're just too excited for any low morale. Drew Hinshaw

MUZIKJUNKI
Driving House

Webpage: muzikjunki.com
Sound: Dirty, melodic, uplifting house with a progressive touch.
Favorite gear: Without a doubt, my Avalon VT-747 [stereo tube compressor/EQ]. Also I like to play with my Access Virus TI and Nord Lead Rack.

Favorite songs: New Order's "Blue Monday." For me, electronic dance music started with this song. Sasha's "Xpander," a classic progressive house tune. Alice D in Wonderland's "Time Problem" – this classic dance tune by Dimitri and Eric Nouhan sounds almost like a live performance – amazing! Mike Oldfield's "Tubular Bells" – just great music. Sour Grapes' "Stay For Now" is my favorite track at this moment.
Influences: I'm influenced by many EDM artists, such as Eric Prydz, Joris Voorn, Junkie XL, Daft Punk, and Chemical Brothers. I'm also quite influenced by musicians like Hiromi Uehara, Ronny Jordan, and even Chopin.
Play by ear or play as written: Ear, because in dance music, it's not so much about harmonies and beautiful chord changes, but more about energy and drive. In the more poppy projects I do, I like to stay more true to the "rules."
Favorite artist you've probably never heard of: My favorite upcoming artists are two Russian guys, Nikitin and Semikashev. All their productions seem to hit the right spot with me, and I play a lot of their stuff at my gigs all over the world.
Practice regimen: I like to be in the studio as much as I can, but due to a very full DJ schedule, I can do about three full days in the studio a week.
Words of wisdom: Success starts with good music, not the other way around. Francis Preve

THE BLACK HOLLIES
Jon Gonnelli Talks Farfisa Rock

VINCE KENG

The music: The Black Hollies are a rock 'n' roll band comprised of equal parts pop, psychedelia, freak-beat, garage, and soul. Our music is best experienced live.

Keys on the new album *Softly Towards The Light*: A Hammond B-3 with a Leslie 122 cabinet, a late '60s U.K. model Vox Continental with wooden keys, a late '60s Farfisa Compact, a Wurlitzer 200A, a broken Mellotron, and a Betsy Ross Spinet upright piano which was damaged in a flood.

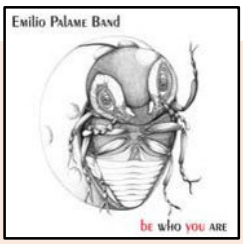
Live rig: For live performances I alternate between the Vox and the Farfisa. I run the organs through a Vox AC30 guitar amplifier. I've found that the Farfisa is more durable for the road whereas the Vox Continental is very sensitive with regard to being battered upon live.

How to find musical space for the keyboard in a loud rock band: In the Black Hollies, the organ's musical place is that of a rhythmic impressionist, the purpose of which is to add textures and colorings that guitars and drums are not capable of. Less is always more. It is important to know when and where to lay back in order to let other things stand out.

Favorite keyboard instrument ever: Hammond B-3 with Leslie cabinet.

The Farfisa: The thing that appeals to me most about the Farfisa Compact is the way the bass notes react through a guitar amp – the warm, full, and nasty bottom end. There's also something about the tone of the Farfisa that blends so well with guitar and bass in the "freak outs" that the Black Hollies rely on to open songs up a bit.

Words of wisdom: I've learned that success in a rock band has a lot to do with your attitude and perceptions. Try to be a positive influence on those around you. Musically, if something sounds good to you, then it *is* good. Be a good listener and always be open to learning new things. Don't be afraid to take risks. Don't be afraid to explore and experiment with something that doesn't come easily with the intention of making the finished work better because of it. Making music is supposed to be cathartic, celebratory, and fun, so try not to take yourself too seriously along the way. Michael Gallant



UNSIGNED ARTIST OF THE MONTH
Emilio Palame Band

Given its meticulous horn and vocal arrangements and top-grade production values, Emilio Palame's R&B/smooth jazz album *Be Who You Are* is clearly a labor of love – and one that vibrates with positive energy and outstanding musicianship throughout. Emilio's jazz-inflected piano chops are in fine form, his solo preludes providing engaging breaths between the otherwise funky, more heavily-arranged material. Speaking of such material, "Run Away" is a standout, showcasing Michel Camilo-esque piano fireworks from Emilio and a Latin funk groove that would make Arturo Sandoval and Eddie Palmieri proud. Inspiring and uplifting. Michael Gallant

emiliopalame.com

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info at korg.com/sv1

KORG

Session Sensei
IS IT MAGIC?

by Scott Healy, keyboardist for *The Tonight Show With Conan O'Brien*

I was once on a panel for auditions at a local college. One by one, the kids would hack away nervously while our group of crusty musicians furiously scribbled notes, nodded pensively, and occasionally looked up to offer forced smiles of encouragement. The only vocalist went last. She ambled up to the dais and announced that she would sing "My Funny Valentine." She didn't have music, but I knew the tune, so I offered to play it with her.

It was clear that amongst my esteemed colleagues, all possessing advanced degrees and résumés that make a guy like me wish he'd stuck with Chopin and Beethoven, clearly none of them had ever backed Aunt Emma at the local VFW. We went to the piano, I found a key for her, and we dove in. I played a short piano solo on the verse, and she came back in and finished up to a round of applause. As I sat back down my chairman leaned over: "That was magical! I couldn't have done what you just did in a million years!"

It was Arthur C. Clarke who said, "Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic," and with a wink to my fellow journeyman keyboardists, I always notice how the refined harmonic skills I gained on countless ratty bandstands give me that magician's edge. Maybe some of you have noticed that, too. But it's not magic, is it?

Cut to a week ago when as I was about to run up onstage on the *Tonight Show*. I was informed that the host would start singing "Danny Boy" later on, and that I was to find his key, slide in with suitable ad lib piano accompaniment, and follow wherever his comedy muse would take him. This is one of the things that I *do*, and the powers that be count on me to be right on. I do my best to make it look easy.

On stage under the lights, as the host crooned his faux Irish tenor to a rousing and hilarious finish, I flashed to Aunt Emma and Uncle Louie at the VFW in New Jersey. I thought of how as a musician, experience is the best teacher, but the sum of our experiences and our presence in the moment is a greater asset. I'm glad I spent so many Saturday nights on the gig. It's not always easy to pay attention and take your performance seriously, especially under the wartime conditions of a less than ideal gig, but you're always sharpening magical skills like following (or leading) a meandering singer, transposing difficult changes, and thinking about form and harmony while you fake a song you barely know – all the while gaining experience that just might someday pay off.

Career Counselor
GO TEAM GO!

by Jon Regen, recording artist of critically acclaimed album, *Let It Go*

It had been a long time since I'd gotten a call to be a sideman. Seven-plus years of solid work as a leader left me pegged as "not interested" by a large chunk of the sideman-seeking population. But nothing could have been farther from the truth. When you're a leader, you're often forced to focus on everything *but* the music – bookings, travel arrangements, publicity – all necessary components to successful music work, but many times removed from the melodies that got us here in the first place. But as a sideman, your job is simply to make the music shine, by any means necessary. A legendary jazz pianist's fabled contract sums it up perfectly: "Performance fee: *Free*. Travel Fee: $50,000." Most of us would play the gig for nothing. It's the *rest* of the work that we need to get paid for!

And so when a few weeks back, a good friend of mine recommended me for a sideman gig, I jumped at the chance. It had been a while since I had been someone else's keyboard player. I was interested to dig into the work head-on.

The thing you forget about sideman work when you're accustomed to being a leader is that it's called work for a reason. Learning someone else's written and recorded catalogue in a matter of days is like cramming for the SATs – entirely possible, but not recommended. Luckily, I had a few weeks while on a tour of my own across Italy to digest the new material. I made notes, and listened to the tunes until I knew them cold.

When I got back to the States, I was able to dig deep into the technical side of the set, programming and tweaking sounds to match those on the artist's record. A vibes part, a Mellotron string sample, a phased piano patch – all these and more were choreographed into the tunes, and I would need to do the same live. I forgot how much planning goes into a sideman's routine – the sound design, the memorization. Everything has to fall into place, or the leader will be left naked on stage. And we've all been there.

The night of the gig, I dragged what seemed like a ton-and-a-half of gear to the show. As a singer and pianist accustomed to playing whatever piano a venue supplies, the workout of carrying keyboards, stands, and amps across town, and up four flights of stairs to the gig, was humbling to say the least.

In the end, a month-plus worth of work on my part allowed the hour-long gig to go off without a hitch. It was a thrill to be a part of a band again, and to remember just how much work goes into putting on someone else's show. It's easy to forget how much effort your band members put in to make you shine, so don't take them for granted. They are worth twice their weight in gold.

I'm looking forward to doing it all again soon. Hopefully next time, the gig will be on a ground floor.

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CD REVIEWS

CASS BIRD

A FINE FRENZY
BOMB IN A BIRDCAGE

Following up her widely acclaimed debut album *One Cell In the Sea*, piano songstress Alison Sudol bears her heart amidst rose petals and thorns with the captivating *Bomb in a Birdcage*. Really, that metaphor says it all – flowing through the veins of her airy pop vocals and flowing, ethereal piano work is no shortage of outside-the-box creative jet fuel. "Electric Twist" bounces along with an atmospheric groove reminiscent of Coldplay and U2, while "Happier" soars over assured acoustic and electric piano work, uplifting synth textures, and just the right amount of gritty guitar to dirty things up beautifully. Good luck pressing "stop" once you've started listening to this one – just spin the disc and enjoy the explosion. Michael Gallant
(Virgin, virginrecords.com)

SWAMPDAWAMP
ROCK THIS COUNTRY

Southern rock is full of characters, and SwampDaWamp comes from the post-Kid Rock brand, though shades of Nugent and Skynyrd abound. Keyboardist Mike "Scooby" Huffman hails from the Billy Powell school of octave runs and whirring Hammond swells on standout party tracks like "Helluva Night" and "Stoned," while his beautiful piano intro on the moving ballad "Daddy Said" shows his more sensitive side. Singer Gig Michaels sounds like David Lee Roth if he weighed 300 pounds and gargled broken glass, which is a total compliment. The band is reported to be a big draw at biker rallies, which no doubt boast receptive audiences. There is something truly authentic about a band like SwampDaWamp, who sound like a fun bunch to party with both on and off stage. Fly high, Swampers! Robbie Gennet
(Big Penny Entertainment, swampdawamp.com)

FRED HERSCH
FRED HERSCH PLAYS JOBIM

Fred Hersch does so many things well (he's a master pianist, accompanist, bandleader, composer, and educator), that you sometimes forget what a gifted interpreter he is of other people's work. On his latest release, Hersch meets and exceeds the challenge of injecting new life into the venerable songbook of Brazilian composer Antonio Carlos Jobim. Playing almost entirely solo, save for percussionist Jamey Haddad's spirited accompaniment on "Brigas Nunca Mais," Hersch tackles well- and lesser-known Jobim tunes with fastidious flair, swinging hard and articulating in a pitch-perfect, almost classical way; listen to his fugue-like solo reading of "O Grande Amor," the album's second track. Time and time again, Hersch pushes himself and the piano to the edge and beyond. On *Fred Hersch Plays Jobim*, he continues to prove he is a fervent force to be reckoned with. Recommended. Jon Regen
(Sunnyside, fredhersch.com)

CHARLIE WOOD
FLUTTER AND WOW

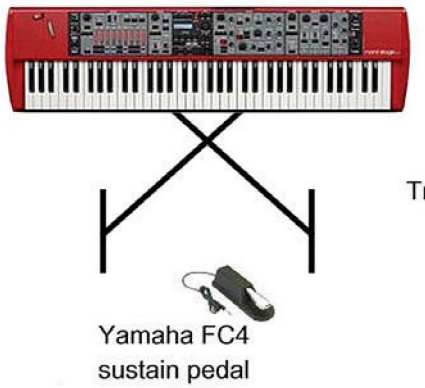
Charlie Wood's latest release *Flutter and Wow* is a rollicking, keyboard-infused prayer meeting. The Memphis-born and now London-based singer-songwriter and multi-instrumentalist comes into his own on this gutsy, grooving album, produced by Norah Jones alum Adam Levy. With a song list culled from the catalogues of some of today's greatest songsmiths (Paul Simon, Elvis Costello, and Tom Waits, to name a few), Wood heaps a healthy dose of piano, B-3, and Wurlitzer alongside his soulful vocals. He even contributes more than a few impressive originals to the mix. On Simon's "American Tune," Wood works the Hammond organ like a church pew pro, pulling pulpit-like chords from its double manuals. And on his own "Doin' the Blah Blah Blah," his piano takes us to Mardi Gras for a rocking, rolling good time. Definitely worth the price of admission. Jon Regen
(Archer Records, charliewood.us)

WEEKEND WARRIOR

ANDREW SANTAGUIDA

Webpage: tinydanza.ca
Day job: I work for a company called E-Z Traxx. We make and distribute power sport accessories. I also work for Ecofile, which helps companies go paperless.
How I got started: I first started taking piano lessons when I was around seven, and learned on an old Ennis upright that my dad bought for five cents. I mostly played classical music until I went to an arts high school [Etobicoke School of the Arts], where I learned different styles. Everyone in the band went to the same school, so we all grew up playing and learning together. I played in a stage band my first year there and didn't really know what I was doing. I remember the first time I tried to do a solo, I just played a bunch of random notes and couldn't wait for it to be over – some things never change, I guess. I basically looked for any opportunity to play with other people and took it.
Band: Toronto-based Tiny Danza. Like any self-respecting hip-hop band, we started off as a folk band. Our vocalist was into rapping, so we started to write more in that style, and a friend who was an emcee joined us. Shows were confusing for a while, playing hip-hop and folk in the same performance. Audiences didn't really know what to make of it, so we figured we should pick one style and stick to it. Hip-hop won out, and we never spoke of those folk songs again. Our style is a mix of R&B/pop with rapping thrown in. We are definitely influenced by bands like the Roots, and usually throw in one of their songs. We usually play in some of the music clubs in Toronto, like the El Mocambo, the Horseshoe Tavern, and the Drake.
Influences: Billy Joel was one of my biggest influences. The first "non-classical" songs I remember learning were "Piano Man" and "Billy the Kid." My favorite recording by him is *The Stranger*, which I've listened to more than any other album. I don't know what exactly keeps me coming back to that album. I just

think every song on there is perfect. I also always come back to Ben Folds and Regina Spektor.
Why I play: Because they make me. Actually, it's like an addiction, and I find it hard to walk by a piano without playing it. It's a great release and escape from whatever's going on. Ed Coury



"The Nord Stage Compact is perfect for what I need. It's great for setting up splits," says Andrew. "Like having a synth bass on the bottom, Rhodes in the middle, and organ on top. It also looks complex, so if I'm not playing at some point during a song, I'll just turn a bunch of knobs to make it look like I'm getting ready to do something big. I use a Traynor K2 as a monitor. I'm currently trying to tell myself I don't need a Korg SV-1, but it's not going so good." [*See our review of the Korg SV-1 on page 52. –Ed.*]

Regina Spektor, *Begin To Hope* (Sire)

Andrew Santaguida admires several keyboard artists, but he puts Regina Spektor near the top of this list. Spektor's music falls in the anti-folk category, along with artists like Ani DiFranco and Billy Bragg. For a sample of her piano work, including the swirling arpeggios of "20 Years of Snow," check out her 2006 release, *Begin To Hope*.

Go See

Check out these keyboard-heavy acts, on tour this month.

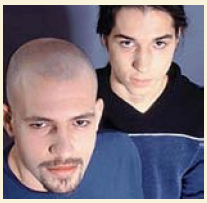
GREGG DELMAN

O.A.R.
ofarevolution.com

Simian Mobile Disco
simianmobiledisco.co.uk

Ozomatli
ozomatli.com

Tower of Power
towerofpower.com



Infected Mushroom
infected-mushroom.com

by Stephen Fortner

KORG MICROSAMPLER
STEALTHY SAMPLING STUDIO

THE PITCH Groove box, keyboard-based sampler, and loop workstation fused into a small but mighty package.

THE BIG DEAL Same improved mini-keys as MicroKorg XL synth. Fourteen-voice polyphony. Key Gate lets you assign consecutive samples from the same source to consecutive keys. Pattern sequencer with 64,000-note memory. Recessed buttons and slots meant to hold iPod-like devices.

WE THINK Not since we first struck a key on an Ensoniq Mirage and heard James Brown go "Hah!" has sampling been so realtime and fun.

$750 list/approx. $500 street, korg.com

MOTU DIGITAL PERFORMER 7
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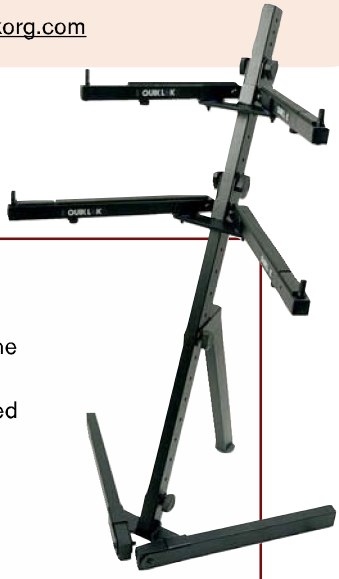
Custom '59 models classic Fender and Marshall amps. Live Room G uses physical modeling for superior speaker cabinet emulations with extensive virtual mic placement.

MUCH MORE Floating channel strip window. EQ and dynamics now inline in each mixer strip. Can now view V-Racks next to tracks in mixer. More in-your-face marker handling. Notation handles lyrics and transposable chord symbols. Vastly improved sample rate conversion. Wave64 file support. Sidechain support for AU instruments.

$795 list/approx. $500 street; $195 upgrade from previous version, motu.com



QUIKLOK SL-820
TAKE A STAND

THE PITCH Two tiers. One column. No hassle.

THE BIG DEAL V-shaped base stays out of the way of sustain and control pedals. Both tiers are fully adjustable for height, angle, and depth, which goes up to 16.1".

WE THINK Check it out if you want an affordable and slick way to position two keyboards in a nice, tight cascade.

$295 list/approx. $150 street, quiklok.com

KENTON MERGE-4 AND LNDR
MIDI WORKHORSE WONDERS

THE PITCH Merge-4 (shown) funnels four MIDI inputs into two outputs. LNDR is a pair of boxes that sends MIDI up to *500 meters*!

THE BIG DEAL Both products capture all note, controller, sys-ex, and MIDI clock data. LNDR uses a standard Cat-5 Ethernet cable to achieve its long-distance MIDI magic of up to half a kilometer.

WE THINK For the stuff you just can't do over USB, nobody makes more functional or rugged boxes than Kenton.

$TBA, kentonuk.com

Want to check out the same press releases that we see about new gear, as soon as we receive them?
Go to keyboardmag.com/news

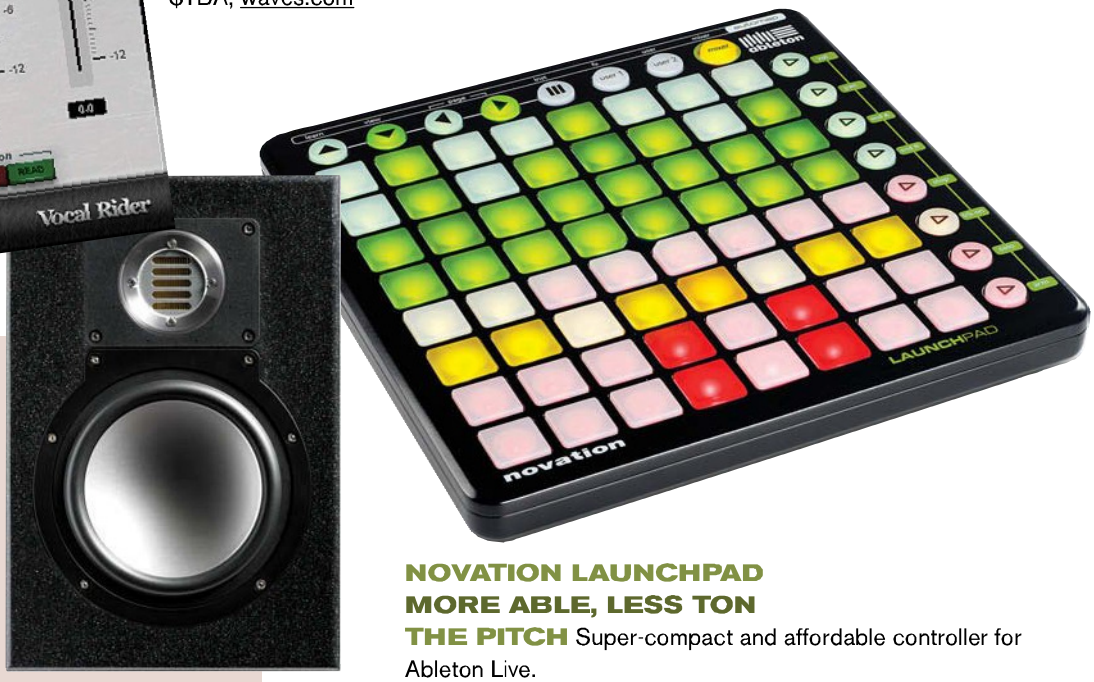
WAVES VOCAL RIDER
INVISIBLE ASSISTANT ENGINEER

THE PITCH "Rides the fader" of your vocal track in relation to the rest of the mix.

THE BIG DEAL Because it's not a compressor, it adds no pumping or coloration to your track. Because you're not drawing volume automation by hand, you save tons of time. You can tweak the automation *it* writes after the fact, of course.

WE THINK We saw it work, and it really is like having an assistant engineer with one finger on the vocal fader – pretty uncanny.

$TBA, waves.com



UNITY AUDIO
THE ROCK
A PRESENT WITH A RIBBON ON TOP

THE PITCH Unity went back to the original designer of the folded ribbon tweeter and built a superior studio monitor around it.

THE BIG DEAL Tweeter provides stunning detail and a wide sweet spot. Baltic birch cabinet and Corian baffle (yes, the kitchen counter material) kills resonances and helps get bass down to 40Hz. True 100W amp designed by high-end audio guy Tim DeParavincini.

WE THINK Unity wasn't the first speaker to popularize the folded ribbon, but the Rock sounds so good for so little money that it just might boot the one that did out of the Garden of Eden.

$1,099.50 list/$999.50 street (each), unityaudio.co.uk

NOVATION LAUNCHPAD
MORE ABLE, LESS TON

THE PITCH Super-compact and affordable controller for Ableton Live.

THE BIG DEAL Less than ten inches square. Buttons can trigger clips or scenes, or work as virtual faders by sliding your finger up and down a column. Surface can split between triggering and fader mode. Works with Automap for ganging with more Launchpads or other Novation controllers.

WE THINK If cost and/or size kept you away from the cool Akai APC40, your prayers have been answered.

$249.95 list/approx. $200 street, novationmusic.com

DIGIDESIGN ELEVEN RACK
DSP-POWERED AMP MODELING

THE PITCH Amp, cabinet, and stompbox models from the Eleven plug-in, improved, cast in hardware, and powered by their own DSP chips.

THE BIG DEAL Guitarists hate latency, so this has none. Works as a standalone effects box or as an interface for Pro Tools LE 8, which is included. Lets you dial in your own amp and effects chain without hitting your computer's CPU. Stereo line ins and XLR mic in as well as hi-Z guitar in. Can function as a re-amping box.

WE THINK If you need killer guitar tracks, this producer's darling of a box could be your primary Pro Tools interface. Serious effect and tone junkies may lament the lack of parallel chains, though.

$1,295 list/approx. $999 street, digidesign.com

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PHOTOGRAPHS BY KAREN COLLINS

Tori Amos

Roots and Reinvention on *Midwinter Graces*

by Michael Gallant

The winter months are well upon us, and we all know what that means – candy canes, wrapping paper, department store sales, Santa hats, and enough sugary holiday music to give the entire Salvation Army diabetes. Thank goodness, then, for alternative piano goddess Tori Amos' stunningly deep *Midwinter Graces*, one of the most compelling and thoroughly un-cheesy holiday albums to come along in years.

While you may have heard year-end classics like "Star of Wonder" and "Emmanuel" before, *Midwinter Graces* is something new. Tori propels her tracks with Wurlitzer and harpsichord, as well as her signature, classically-tinged piano work; backed by longtime bandmates Matt Chamberlain on drums, Jon Evans on bass, and Mac Aladdin on guitars, the results are ephemeral and uplifting, sultry but innocent – reverent, but rocking. Throw in perfectly crafted orchestral arrangements by John Philip Shenale, and you have a holiday blessing indeed.

Just as important as the sonic textures Tori produces are the unexpected compositional resurrections she performs on the album. Far from the shopping mall versions many of us know and love (or love to hate), Tori's interpretations of holiday classics grew from copious research into the songs' folk roots. Mixed with choice original tunes, the reinvented songs comprise an album as deft and unique as the piano woman herself.

What inspired you to record a seasonal album?

[Universal Music Group CEO] Doug Morris has always been my mentor. I knew him from the mid-'80s when he was chairman of Atlantic Records and broke *Little Earthquakes* worldwide. He's always gotten what I did and he likes it when I push things. He put it out there to me early this year and said, "I'd like to know what your take would be on some of these songs. I have loads of seasonal records that we put out. I'd just like to see how you would make it your own. You've grown up with this stuff."

We talked about it being beautiful and ephemeral. And I started to talk about the fact that our ancestors have been celebrating the rebirth of light long before Christianity got in on the act.

How did you approach making these songs your own – "Star of Wonder," for example?

I've been curious my whole life about the story of the wise men and Persian mysticism. I always thought, "I don't hear anything of their culture in arrangements of 'We Three Kings.' So I began to think to myself, "Alright then, in my story, you're going to know that you're coming across the desert, and you're going to get a sense of these men and their culture." That's the thing – growing up as a minister's daughter, sometimes I would just think a lot of what I was hearing was really where these people were during their own times. So I wanted to bring back some of the roots that I think the stories are talking about. For "Star of Wonder," think Led Zeppelin, of course.

That's always a good place to start.

I love the work that they did with their Arabic string arrangements. So I played for John Philip Shenale, talked him through my vision, and he really got it. I tracked it with the guys first – Matt and Jon – and they got a sense of the rhythm. We laid down the rhythm track first with the Wurlitzer, and that gave it that early Zeppelin sound. Then we brought in everything that you could possibly imagine percussion-wise for Matt to play, from tympanis to concert bass drums, two octaves of concert bells, along with his kit and all the other ethnic percussion. Matt had a huge palette to work with, which was exciting.

So "Star of Wonder" has that flavor – you'll recognize the carol in the chorus. But it has beautiful dancing girls now. In my seasonal world, I think beautiful dancing

girls celebrating the rebirth of light – in the Christian story, the poetry for that is the birth of a baby boy. But the rebirth of light that happens every year has been celebrated by our ancestors for thousands of years and I wanted to capture that.

It makes sense why it's called a "seasonal album," rather than a "Christmas album."

Being brought up as a minister's daughter, this stuff gets hammered into you. It's part of a language of growing up. You just know hymns, no different than if you grow up in a family where both parents are chefs. You're exposed to certain things – a palette.

Doug talked to me about the idea that so many records are made just upholding arrangements that get passed down. But where do these songs come from? I was driven to think, "Well, wait a minute. If I'm going to do this then I'm part of a tradition and that tradition is variations on the theme." For example, in Britain, "Away in a Manger" is a completely different melody than the "Away in a Manger" that we grew up singing. The reason for some of this is because as denominations were spreading across the Atlantic – Methodism and all kinds of things – churches would want to have their own tunes, to separate themselves from other denominations. You've got to work pretty fast to start pulling together carols and hymns if you don't have great composers at your beck and call, and familiarity also plays a part. So they would sometimes use words that people knew and then put tunes from other sources. For instance, "What Child Is This" is from "Greensleeves." Can you imagine writing a religious tune to "Billie Jean"? "Jesus is the Son," instead of "the kid is not my son." So the Brits didn't embrace "What Child Is This" because "Greensleeves" has been a folk song for them for hundreds of years. It was sort of bastardized in their minds by this hijacking.

I use hijacking intentionally because there's a tradition of songs coming from different sources. Sea shanties – a lot of early hymns come from folk songs. The words would change, and maybe a little bit of the melody, to make it a religious song, because it was a hit and people could sing it. That really fascinated me.

So did you go for true recreations of the original folk tunes?

I can't see what it was in the 1400s but what I can do is make something that has an energy that's a nod to its roots in spirit, and yet comes from our perspective now. So I changed some words because they were changing words in the 1800s, and we have a very different viewpoint. So I'm part of that tradition.

It sounds like you did a tremendous amount of research for this project.

I did. But if I'm honest with you, I did a lot of research not even knowing I was doing it – just growing up as a preacher's daughter and trying to understand my household. Religion is the center of my parents' lives. There was a burning need my whole life to understand what was happening in other cultures that I hadn't been taught, because it wasn't in the Bible.

So yes, I was driven to find out what was going on in Ireland before Christianity – their mythology, the mythology in Britain before the Romans came, the mythology in Rome. It was fascinating to see that there were other "gods" that had been born on December 25th before Christianity that were celebrated.

I looked at Doug at one point and said, "Look, I've got my mom, and all this music is so sacred to her." Doug looked at me and said, "Yeah, okay, so you're walking a very thin line. I want less of 'Born is the King of Israel' – too much of that and I'm going to go crazy, and your mom doesn't want you to be shocking, so you have to please both of us." And I said, "That's a really tall order." And it is. But what I will say is a lot of my classical training came in. This is not a pop record. This is more a classical work. Even though it's contemporary

Midwinter Keys, Shifting Registers

"Bösendorfer came down and gave the recording piano this gorgeous makeover," says Tori. "Which was important because you hear the piano a lot on this work, and she shines." The company-lent piano was recorded at Martian Engineering in Cornwall.

While tracking with the piano and her harpsichord, Tori employed a signature keyboard technique. "Sometimes one hand plays on one register and the other on another register, and then that might swap in the 'B' section of a song to other keyboards," she describes. "So you might play Rhodes with the left hand and use the right hand on a different instrument. Then you'd pick that left hand up and play the higher register on the piano, so you're playing possibly a bass configuration with your left hand but on the higher notes. Then your right plays in the mids, maybe around the middle *C* area. You would never play the same way with your left hand as with your right, so to put it in that higher register, already you're creating new possibilities of tone and rhythm, and the marriage is a unique one. It's a wonderful hybrid creature," she continues. "I use this technique on every record now. In 'Star of Wonder' there's some of that going on."

music, I approached it more as a kind of classical study.

What does that mean in terms of your piano playing?

I think it's about structure. I would look at portions of a carol and think, "Wow, this is the magic. Now I need to design around this." So if you think about it like an architect – they're trying to do this in Bologna, Italy. Bologna's an old, old city and yet they need to add more buildings. It's been really tricky trying to find the architect that can merge the ancient and the new, and what that design would be. That's what I had to do, to work as a musical architect. The classical study that I did for so long, when you're forced to study compositions and the different movements and why they work, helped.

[Studying classical] gives you tools that you don't necessarily get to use all the time when you're in the pop medium. But when you're dealing with something like this and you're treading on very thin ice and sacred ground in some ways, to know that variations on a theme is just part of the classical world [is important], and I enjoy working and composing variations around a theme. You just have to make sure that your variations are as good as the old ones, and you have to know when you don't have it and when you do. I began to see the reactions from the musicians when they were excited. There were also songs that just didn't work.

In our last interview [*Keyboard,* February '08], you spoke about the different hats you wear in the music creation process. It sounds like what you're talking about now is more the Tori-the-producer role.

Yes, and also Tori the composer. This was really more than an entertainer and singer-songwriter project. You really have to walk in and have your chops up to speed as a writer and as a player. Everybody I worked with was really surprised, and all they said was, "We had no idea that this is what it would be." I said, "Well, what did you think it was going to be?" They said, "Well, we didn't know, but not this. This is different." Some of them just thought that they were going to walk in and do what they knew in their heads as a Christmas seasonal record. But they were in there doing all kinds of different rhythms and textures.

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This is not a shocking album. In fact, the shocking thing about this record is that there's nothing shocking on it. I don't have that hidden track called, "She's A Hussy, Merry Christmas." At the start, Doug said to me, "Tori, you've proven yourself. You've shocked us enough for many lifetimes, so can you just do something beautiful and ephemeral?" And I said, "Yeah, I can do that."

What was the dynamic like working with a full orchestra on this record?

I really trust Philly – John Philip Shenale – as an arranger. He's great, and he understands the songs that I've written. We spent a lot of time talking, he sent the arrangements in, and we went through it all. By the time we did the string date or the brass date, I knew every part of the arrangement – if something wasn't quite right, we changed it. Therefore, there shouldn't be any surprises on the string date.

Years ago I worked with a string arranger who wouldn't let anybody hear his arrangements before recording. This was when I was just a bit naïve, he was well known, and I let somebody at the record company talk me into it. Well, the day we were recording, honestly, hand on my heart, I said, "Oh dear, we must have the wrong song up because there's no way this could be right." I thought I was listening to a train wreck, and there were four songs like this. It was the most painful day of my life. At the end of the day, I looked at everybody and I said, "Okay, we're going to have one drink and then we're coming back and I'm erasing the whole f***ing thing." They said, "You are *not*. It's a 70-piece orchestra." I said, "I am too. I'm the producer and the artist. I know the budget. I'm the one that has to be accountable and this could destroy somebody called Tori's career. That is not going to happen." I knew that so much money was involved that the record company might try to make me keep it. So I erased it and I learned.

Therefore, I never work with anybody who can't show their arrangements before a string date. John Philip Shenale and I have a great relationship, so that's why that works.

Judging by where you are today, it was the right choice.

Yes. But you don't have hindsight in the moment. You have to trust your musicality, and I was just sick. My heart was breaking. I said to myself, "Okay, this is an expensive lesson, but we're never going to do this again." You don't work with musicians who can't share with you where they think something should go.

When you talked about brushing up your chops for this album, did that manifest in going back and studying counterpoint and running scales?

I had to play a lot. I did play the harpsichord on a couple songs, more as a background instrument with the piano. But that meant that my fingering had to be really tight. I would work on what I knew I was going to have to play so that my fingering was confident and so that my fingers would get to know the landscape of this new structure. The piano is very central on this record, more so than in many years. k

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Fledgling indie rockers thenewno2 would be cool regardless of their blessed origins and rock royalty connections. Though founding member Dhani Harrison's father George was a Beatle, the music of thenewno2 is refreshingly original, leaving comparisons between elder and younger Harrisons mostly to their looks (which are uncannily similar). Harrison and drummer Oli Hecks were responsible for the synths that permeate the band's album *You Are Here*, and the talented Jonathan Sadoff was brought in to play those parts live. *Keyboard* met up with Sadoff during rehearsals in Los Angeles to find out how thenewno2 is doing on the path to no1.

Early Days

Sadoff started out as a guitar player and messed around with keyboards a bit on the side, but when he studied at the University of Southern California, he began to take the keys more seriously. "I was a theory-head when I was a kid," he says. "I loved my modes! I started getting into a lot of jazz theory, and then went to study music at the USC Thornton School of Music. I was more in the classical world over there. Probably the most rewarding part of my education at USC was arranging for the school's symphony orchestra. Sitting in front of 110 people playing something I arranged was such a trip. I was hooked at that point, and began working even harder as a composer and arranger."

Growing up, Sadoff loved Pink Floyd's Richard Wright, whom he credits as the reason he bought his first synth. "I wanted to make the sounds they were making, so I

Road Warrior

Jonathan Sadoff and thenewno2

by Robbie Gennet

bought an old MicroMoog," he says. "Then I got way into Radiohead and continued fueling my synth obsession. I love the control Johnny Greenwood has over what seems to be pure chaos. And the way he pulls everything off live is just humbling. I'm also a massive Billy Preston fan, for obvious reasons. He's a god! Same said for Stevie Wonder. I'm also very influenced by Bruce Hornsby. He has such a wonderful touch."

Sadoff's early keyboards included "some really funny little Casios" and some old Roland gear lent by a neighbor. But it was the MicroMoog that started his obsession with synths. After that discovery, he got a Nord Electro 2 and bought as many software synths as he could find. "I love 'em because I can use them live through Logic MainStage," he says. "I've mainly used Arturia Prophet V, WayOutWare TimewARP 2000, and GForce M-Tron. Last year I went out and bought an old '60s Wurlitzer spinet piano to have around the house and realized it sounded so cool recorded. So I moved it into my studio and have been getting these really cool 'Lady Madonna' piano sounds, which make me really happy. Most excitingly, Dhani and I just bought a Minimoog Voyager Electric Blue from Moog, but to our advantage, they were out of stock and all they had was a custom one with purple lights on it, so we were like, 'that's the coolest thing ever!' So we have the only 'Electric Purple' Moog!"

Sadoff started playing when he was six and recording when he was 11 years old. "Not in any sort of professional capacity," he says. "But by the time I got some bigger opportunities, I was such a nerd that being in the studio or on stage didn't scare me at all." His first pro sessions were as keyboardist and guitar player for producer and engineer Paul McKenna. "I ended up doing loads of sessions for him and really learning how to make records," he says. "We became very close, but when I was first introduced to him, it was as '*16-time Grammy Award-winning producer-engineer Paul McKenna*!' I was 19 and considered running away!"

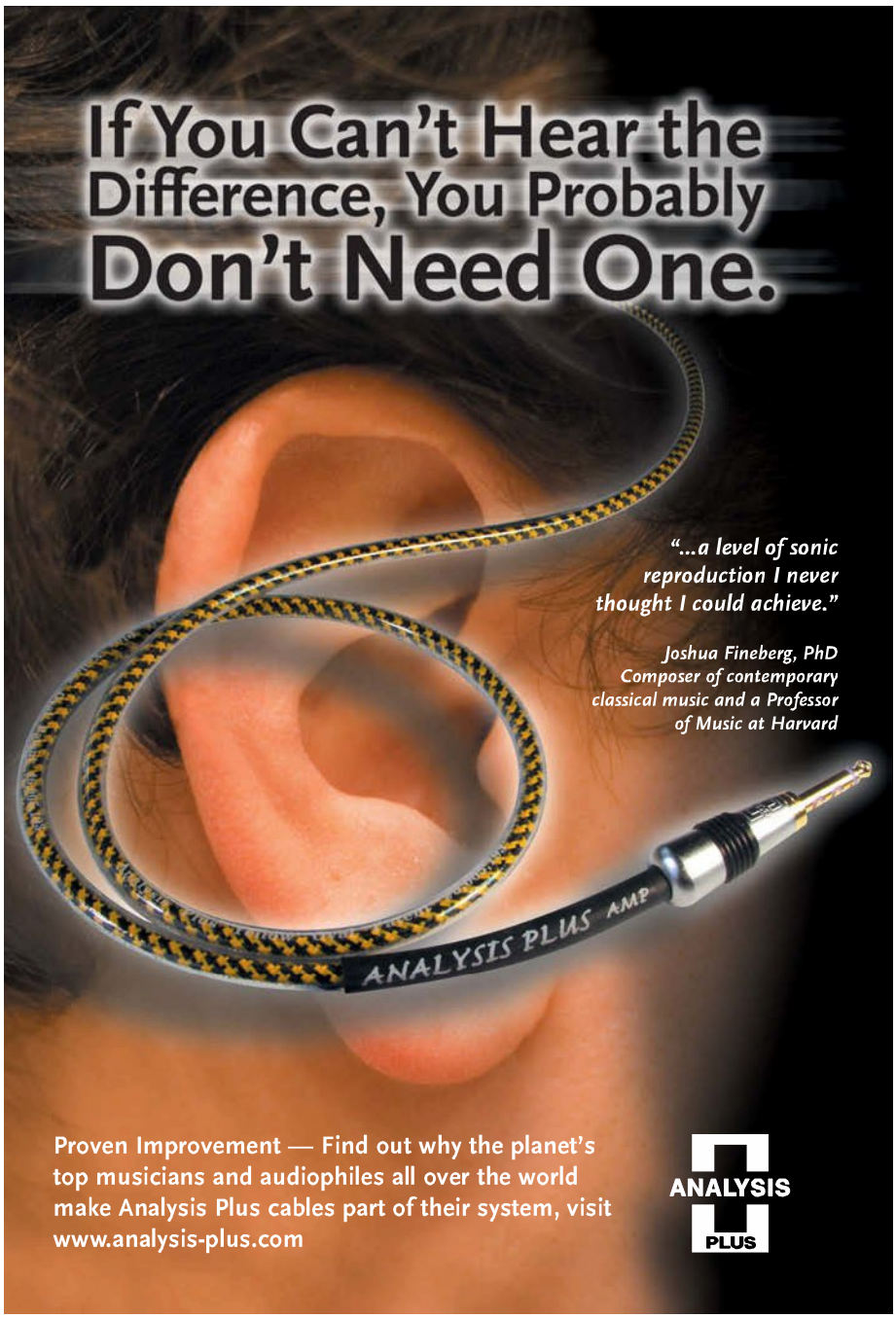
The RockBand Route

Beyond his burgeoning résumé, Sadoff credits the video game RockBand for his gig with thenewno2. "Dhani, Oli, and I had some mutual friends and one very good friend ambushed us by bringing me over to Dhani's house to 'hang out and play RockBand,'" he explains. "The guys were tired of auditioning people, and I was pretty busy scoring movies, writing songs, and producing records. I had no real interest in being back in bands and if our friend had told either of us why he brought me over, we would have all been weird about it. But that was what was so amazing. We all got on instantly and before we knew it, we were playing Radiohead's *In Rainbows* downstairs. We all knew it backwards and forwards and it had only been out for five days! We realized at that point we would get along swimmingly." The next day, Harrison offered him the keyboard slot and he accepted. "I went home, learned the record, and practiced my ass off," says Sadoff. "It was a serendipitous moment, because in that same week, [guitarist] Jeremy Faccone and [bassist] Jason Hiller joined the band and were instantly like family too. The rest is history!"

Sadoff Secrets

Band webpage: thenewno2.com
Twitter: twitter.com/thenewnojon
Favorite inspirational records: Pink Floyd's *Shine On You Crazy Diamond*, the Beatles' *Let It Be*, Radiohead's *Kid A*, Stevie Wonder's *Innervisions*, and Elton John's *Goodbye Yellow Brick Road.*
Selected production and songwriting credits: Bryan Scary and the Shredding Tears, the Outline, Taryn Manning, Kiev, Kelly Sweet, Kandice Melonakos; members of Maroon 5, Bright Eyes, and Rooney.
Selected film scoring credits: *Good Time Max*, written and directed by and starring James Franco; *The King of Central Park*, written and directed by Max Winkler and David Gelb and featured at the 2006 Tribeca Film Festival; *The Merry Gentleman*, starring and directed by Michael Keaton and Kelly MacDonald and featured at the 2008 Sundance Film Festival.
Origin of band name: Groundbreaking '60s TV series *The Prisoner*, in which creator Patrick McGoohan played a British spy who angrily resigns, only to wake in an idyllic-but-sinister "Village" from which there is no escape. Every resident had a number, even the Village mayor, known as Number Two. In each episode, a new Number Two played by a new actor would try to coerce or trick McGoohan into revealing why he resigned.

At the time, the album had already been completed with Hecks and Harrison sharing synth credits on the recordings, though Paul Hicks, the mixer and engineer on the record, was a major force in some of the synth and electronic elements on the disc as well. As he learned his way around the music, Sadoff felt right at home in the keyboard chair. "I think I have a knack for adding decorations and manipulating sounds," he says. "It was the perfect role for me in a band because a lot of the sounds aren't necessarily technically busy, but there are tons of different ones. As I got comfortable with the band, I began adding my own touches to things. The live platform is always so different from the record. If there's a keyboard part I think I could recreate better on guitar, I have that freedom. They call me the 'Swiss Army knife!' I guess it's amusing for them to watch me run around with my hands full all the time. I enjoy it though." The challenging gig increased Sadoff's abilities to perform onstage. "At one point, I figured out how to play bass on the Moog with my left hand, synth lead with my right, and organ with the tuning peg of my guitar, whilst singing!" he beams.



Gear and Scoring

Sadoff centers his live rig around Apple Logic Studio, particularly the MainStage live hosting app. "We had a bunch of the sounds from the record stored in Logic, which is the platform that I use mostly in my studio," he says. "So I decided to start with MainStage as my live platform. I then loaded in any other soft synths that I needed. I use an M-Audio Axiom to control that, because I like the MIDI faders, pots, and trigger pads. It's a nice combo of knobs and buttons. I've also been using Nord keyboards for a long time, and I had an Electro 2 that I use for the basic keyboard sounds like Rhodes, Wurly, piano, and organ. I'm just very comfortable with their interface and I think their samples are the best on the market. I run the Electro through a Boss reverb pedal."

As time went by, Sadoff felt he was missing a key piece to his rig. "A month or so into rehearsals, I added my Minimoog Voyager because there were some sub-bass parts that I felt I could enhance beyond what was even on the record for the live show," he says. "I have been obsessed with Moogs since I was a teenager so they're like second nature to me. Even my guitar parts in the band are much like synth parts. They're mostly filter-based and I get to create cool pads and noises, using EBows, envelope filters, and really nasty overdrives."

As a long time film scorer, Sadoff has logged tons of time in the studio using a variety of real and virtual sounds. "I use EastWest sample libraries religiously for orchestral sounds, and recently I've been digging the Arturia Prophet V," he says. "It's so authentic! At heart, I am really a nerd for toy pianos, glockenspiels, xylophones, pump organs, old Casios, harmoniums, Celeste, harpsichords – you name it. If it makes a quirky sound, I'll find a way to use it!"

When it comes to film scoring, Sadoff's passion is undeniable. "I love it," he says. "It's labor-intensive and at times very grueling, but the reward of hearing your music through massive theater speakers with a few hundred people sitting around you is totally worth it!" Sadoff has also written music for the HBO series *Tell Me You Love Me* and worked under

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blockbuster composers Trevor Rabin, Marco Beltrami, and Christopher Lennertz. "Working for guys like that is like going to grad school," he says. "They are so seasoned that you're always just learning new ways to do things."

Beyond the Big Screen

Sadoff's advice to up-and-coming musicians stems from his work both in front of and behind the mixing board. "Be as diverse as you possibly can!" he says. "Your path will choose you one day and you won't have any say in it. Never turn down an opportunity to develop a skill, because one day that skill set may be your 'thing.' And get out there! Work two jobs: one as a musician or student of music, and the other as an entrepreneur. You have to be both if you really want to make it. The business is tough these days, so you have to be a juggernaut and keep plugging away."

On the road, Sadoff also advises, be sure to get some solo time worked into your schedule. "What I've gathered from the traveling I have done is you should get time alone whenever you can. Recharge and only keep the people around you who share your vibe. Don't let people get under your skin if you don't agree. Just block that stuff out. Don't let a bad apple spoil it for ya!"

Hopefully, Sadoff and company won't find too many bad apples as they continue to tour. Once off the road, the band heads to England to make another record, this time with Sadoff on board from conception. After hearing their live set, anticipation for thenewno2's album no2 should propel it to no1! K

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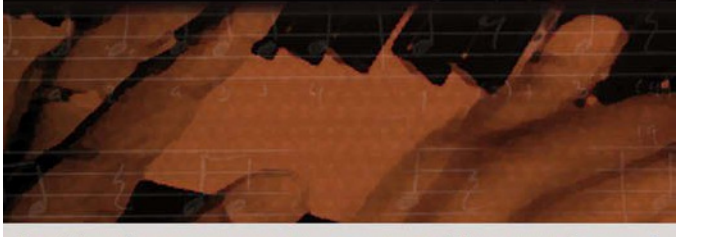
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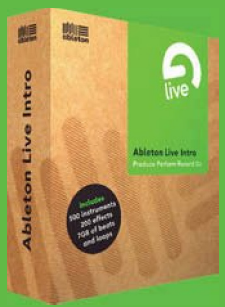

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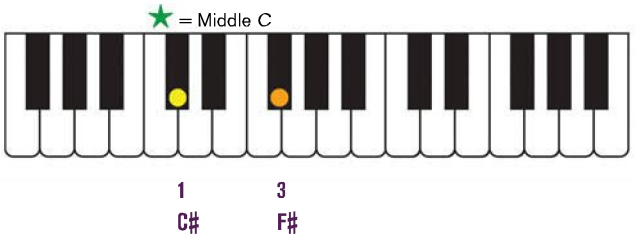
Thriller (Epic)

MICHAEL JACKSON'S "BILLIE JEAN"

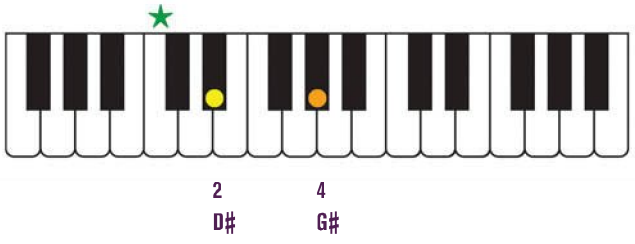
by Michael Gallant

Michael Jackson created some of the most universally memorable – and downright funky – music of the last century. His hit "Billie Jean," from the best-selling album of all time, *Thriller*, makes great use of synth bass and strings to lay down a hard groove and mysterious vibe. Want to learn the central bass riff and chordal stabs that make the tune instantly recognizable? If your axe allows it, split your keyboard at middle *C* with a slightly grungy, Minimoog-esque bass sound in the lower register and a string sound with a fast attack (such as a *marcato* patch) in the upper register. Listen to the track a few times, walk through the simplified examples below, and play along, on the floor, in the round. . . . k

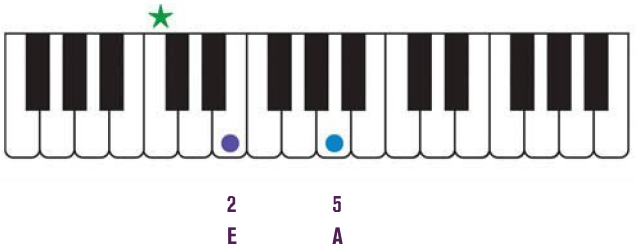
Ex. 1. Here's the first right-hand chord, just the root and fifth of *F♯min*.



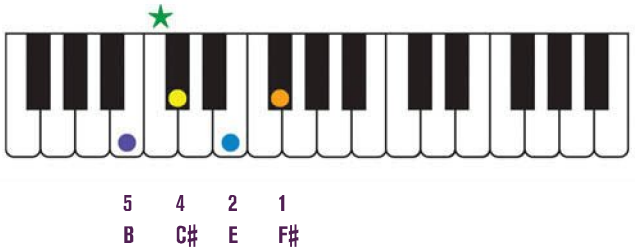
Ex. 2. Next, move both notes up a whole step to *D♯* and *G♯*.



Ex. 3. The third right-hand chord is the exact same shape, a half step higher: *E* and *A*.



Ex. 4. Here's how your left hand should lay on the keyboard in order to play the signature "Billie Jean" bass line, which is transcribed in Example 5. Just play the notes under your fingers in this order – 1, 4, 2, 1, 2, 4, 5, 4 – and you've got it.



Ex. 5. Here's the bass line and right-hand part in traditional notation. Be sure to count along to time the right-hand stabs just right, and don't forget to line up those hits with the appropriate bass notes in the left hand.

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ROCK THE PIANO GLISSANDO

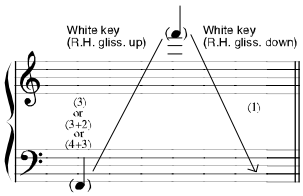
by Scott Healy

When's the right time to use a gliss in rock piano? Share your thoughts on our forums at keyboardmag.com.

It's part comedy and part drama. Early rockers, Broadway rehearsal pianists, and Jersey rockers alike have used and abused the piano glissando. It's dramatic, cool, and aggressive, but it's also a tad clichéd – which could be bad, unless that's what you're going for!

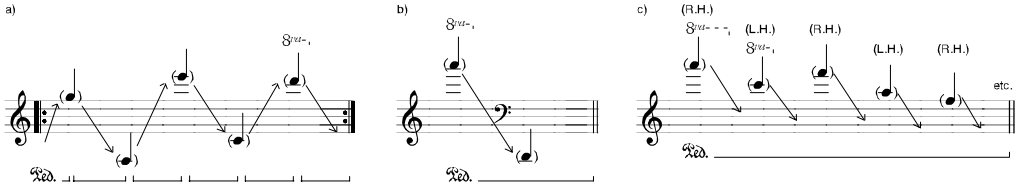
On the bandstand, when does one employ a full piano glissando? Well, unless you're in a Jerry Lee Lewis tribute band or playing "Rosalita" with Bruce Springsteen, the answer is almost never. That's not to say it can't be just the right musical effect in the moment, and certainly every serious modern pianist should know how to do it without causing serious injury (to yourself or to your listeners). k

Want to see exactly how to play piano glissandi? Watch video of this lesson at keyboardmag.com.

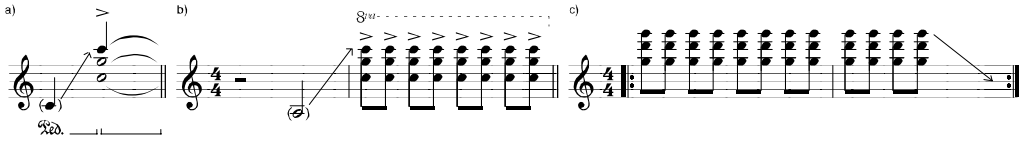


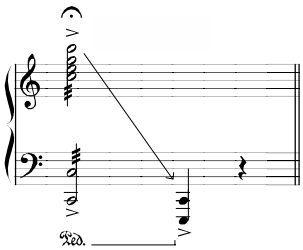
Ex. 1. The right-hand gliss up can be fingered with either the third finger alone, or any combination of the second, third, and fourth fingers. Going down, use the thumb; it's strong enough on its own. Try to let only your fingernail make contact with the keys. Otherwise you could hurt the skin over your nail. Start in the vicinity of a low note, then rake your hand over the white keys till you get up to the top of the piano, then turn your hand around and go back down, as shown here. Reverse the fingering for the left hand – the nail of the thumb going up and the second, third, and fourth fingers on the way down.

Ex. 2. Gliss up and down the piano as in 2a, making different notes your stopping and starting points. Add some sustain pedal. You'll see immediately how much the sound builds up with the pedal down, more so on some pianos than others. On digital pianos with limited polyphony, sustaining throughout the slur can cut off some notes. Work this example with each hand; be sure to experiment with the pressure you apply and the speed with which you gliss. In 2b, try a full *fortissimo* sweep down with the right hand using the thumbnail. Hold the pedal down and listen to how your instrument responds. The downward sweep is the most common piano gliss in rock music. Jerry Lee Lewis and other early rockers loved its drama, and the cascading effect shown in 2c is the most dramatic. Here, a quick right-hand sweep down is overlapped with a quick left-hand sweep down, then the right hand, then the left, over and over.



Ex. 3. Do a quick sweep up with the right hand in 3a, catch it in the pedal, then momentarily release the pedal while you land on a note or chord at the end of your sweep. This is an interesting flourish to add to your repertoire, as you never know when a '60s cocktail party might break out; you can also try this technique by glissing with the left hand and hitting the final chord with the right. The technique in 3b may be a little awkward, but you might use it sometime: Gliss up with the right hand, right into a rock riff. Make the gliss in time – here, it's two beats long – and you'll have more control. You'll use the variation in 3c more if you're doing the Jersey rock thing. The slide down fills a few beats after a phrase, or going into a new phrase.





Ex. 4. For a dramatic ending flourish following a tremolo chord, sweep down with the right hand and button it up with a final note in the left hand, clearing the pedal just before you punch out the button.

"YES! Just nailed that Coltrane solo. Now I gotta finish that stupid science project..."
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What are some of your favorite minor-scale-heavy albums? Share your thoughts on our forum at keyboardmag.com. You might just end up featured in print or online!

Listen!

For some great minor scale action, check out these albums:

Herbie Hancock, Michael Brecker, and Roy Hargrove, *Directions in Music*; listen for various modes of the melodic minor.

Richard Beirach, *Elm*; listen for Dorian mode and melodic minor scale use.

Wynton Kelly, *Piano*; listen for the Aeolian mode.

MINOR SCALE MASTERY

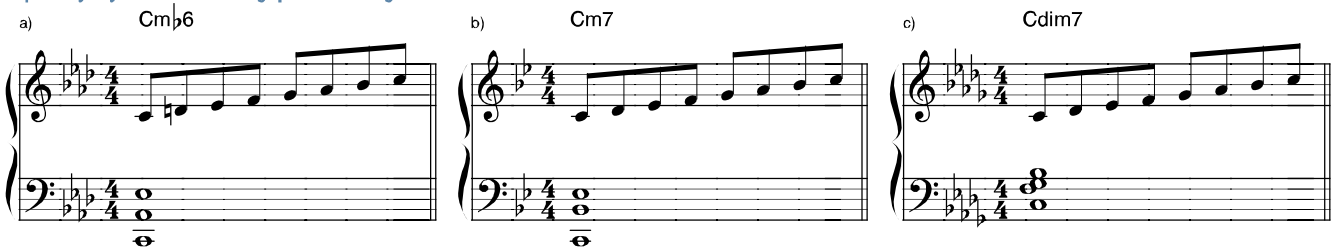
by Andy LaVerne

Minor chords are used liberally in jazz, both in standards and originals, so it's important to know your options when it comes to playing scales over these chords.

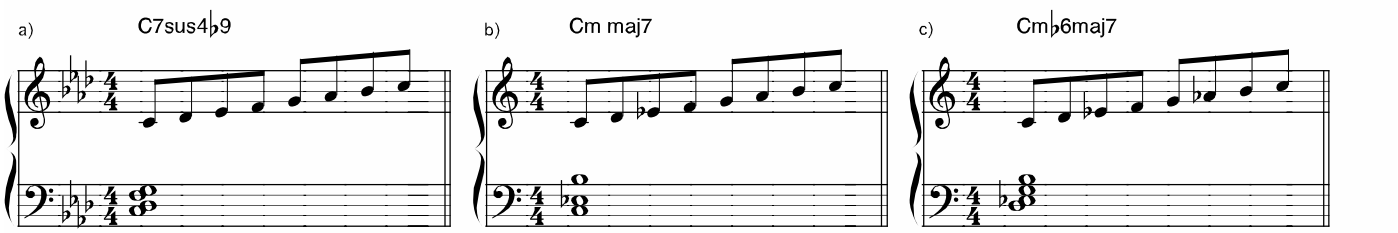
On the surface, you could surmise that a minor chord would indicate a minor scale, and to that end, that a natural minor scale would suffice. However, the first choice for a scale over a minor chord in jazz improvisation is a Dorian mode, which is the second mode of a major scale. The natural minor, also known as the Aeolian mode, is the sixth mode of a major scale (and is its relative minor). The Aeolian mode is generally used in a specific setting, over a minor chord with a flat sixth degree. The key difference between Dorian and Aeolian is that the Dorian mode has a major sixth, whereas the Aeolian mode has a minor sixth. The brighter sound of the major sixth is usually the jazz player's preference for minor chords. The sixth is a pretty color tone, and part of the upper structure triad (or chord extension) of 9, 11, and 13. So, a *Cm* chord, with a *C* Dorian mode, contains a scale tone triad built on the second degree, which is a *Dm* triad.

There are other minor scales that have specific chordal applications, and can expand your palette of colors and choices over minor chords. Following is a list of the most-used minor scales and examples of their chordal applications. k

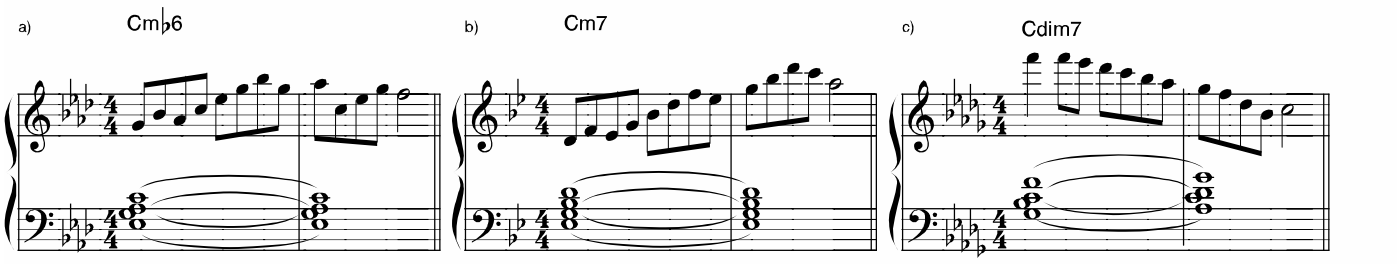
Ex. 1. The *C* Aeolian mode (natural minor scale) shown in 1a is the relative minor of *E*♭ major. Though often played on its own, the Aeolian mode can also create interest in a longer harmonic rhythm of a minor chord, by switching between the Dorian mode and Aeolian modes. The *C* Dorian mode in 1b comes from the parent scale of *B*♭ major. Dorian is often the default mode when playing over minor chords in jazz; it has a somewhat brighter sound than Aeolian due to the major sixth. 1c shows the *C* Locrian mode, which comes from the parent scale of *D*♭ major. The Locrian (a.k.a. the seventh mode of the major scale) is a good choice for half-diminished chords, especially if you're constructing quartal voicings for those chords.



Ex. 2. Play through the *C* Phrygian mode, which has parent scale *A*♭ major, in 2a. The Phrygian mode has a distinctly minor quality, mainly because of the flat third. However, the application for this mode is usually over a *7*♭*9* chord, or a *sus4* chord. 2b shows the *C* melodic minor scale. The melodic minor scale can be thought of as a major scale with a flat third, or a natural minor scale (Aeolian mode) with raised sixth and seventh degrees. Also sometimes known as the "jazz minor," the scale differs from its traditional-harmony cousin in that the construction remains the same whether ascending or descending. In traditional harmony, the sixth and seventh are raised a half step ascending, and lowered a half step descending. The left-hand shell voicing of root and guide tones gives an outline of the sound of the scale. This scale can create movement when playing on a minor chord for an extended duration, as in the standard "My Funny Valentine." It can also be used as a standalone harmony. 2c shows the *C* harmonic minor scale. The harmonic minor has a flat third, flat sixth, and a major seventh. The left-hand chord is a rootless voicing of 9, flat 3, 5, and major 7. The unusual intervallic construction of this scale (the augmented second and interval of an enharmonic minor 3rd between the 6th and 7th degrees) sets this scale apart. The unusual chord symbol expresses the characteristic tones; however the scale can be played without these alterations.



Ex. 3. Once you have the scales down, the next challenge is to create lines or melodies using the notes of the scale. The ascending line of eighth-notes in 3a uses intervals of diatonic thirds. More specifically, the first two notes are an enclosure of the sixth. The *A*♭ becomes the root of a scale tone ninth chord (*A*♭*maj9*), which resolves to the root (*A*♭), and then arpeggiates again from the third using octave displacement (down an octave). The phrase comes to rest on the color tone of the 11th. The left-hand chord is a rootless voicing for *Fm7*. Similar in construction to the previous example, 3b starts with an enclosure of the 3rd, then arpeggiates up a scale tone ninth chord (*E*♭*maj9*). The left hand chord is a rootless voicing for *Cm7*. The descending passage in 3c uses notes from the *C* Locrian mode. The line begins with a descending *C* Locrian starting on the 11th, and concludes with a descending arpeggio of the *A*♭ major scale tone triad. The last three notes are also an enclosure of the seventh of the *C* half-diminished chord. The left hand plays a rootless voicing for *A*♭*7*.



Ex. 4. The ascending line in 4a begins with a scalar passage, then an enclosure of the fifth, which then acts as the leading tone for the ascending arpeggiation of the scale tone *A*♭*maj7* chord. The line comes to rest on the seventh of the *C7sus4*♭*9*. The line in 4b begins with descending scale tone thirds, followed by a downward arpeggiation of a *Cm* triad from the root. The final phrase ends with an intervallic pattern using the *C* melodic minor scale. 4c begins on the fifth of the *Cm*♭*6maj7*, which acts as the leading tone to the scale tone *A*♭*dim7* arpeggio, which then repeats using octave displacement in the last measure.

How do you make your kick . . . kick? Let us know on the forums or by commenting on this article at keyboardmag.com.

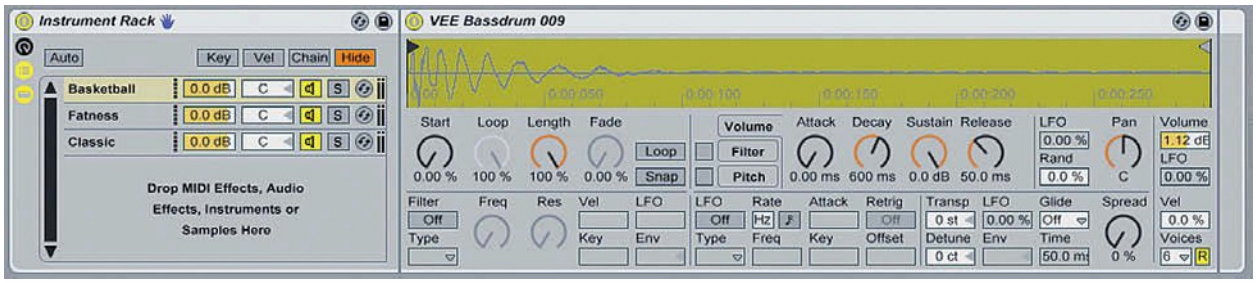
THE KICK INSIDE

by Francis Preve

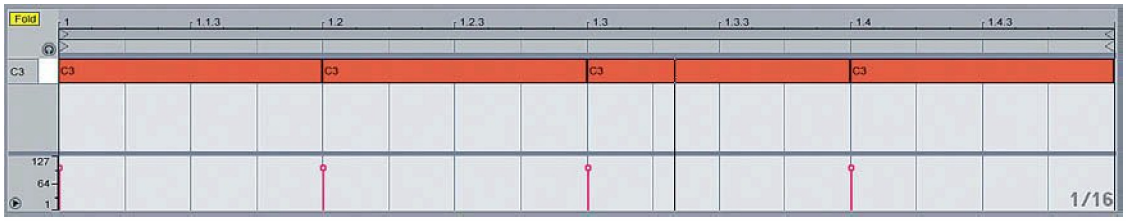
I'm constantly asked about kick drums. After all, in dance music, it's quite possibly the single most important element in a track. With zillions of kicks available via factory presets and third-party soundware, finding the perfect kick for your tracks can take hours. This month, I'll show you my own personal technique for quickly nailing it – and defining your own unique sound in the process.

The approach is blissfully simple: Spend an afternoon sifting through your collection and set aside three (or more kicks), each with different qualities, then make those kicks part of your DAW's starting template. You can then use envelopes, volume, and/or filters to sculpt them into the perfect kick for a given track. This technique works with any DAW that includes soft samplers, or you can use a third-party sampler such as Native Instruments Kontakt.

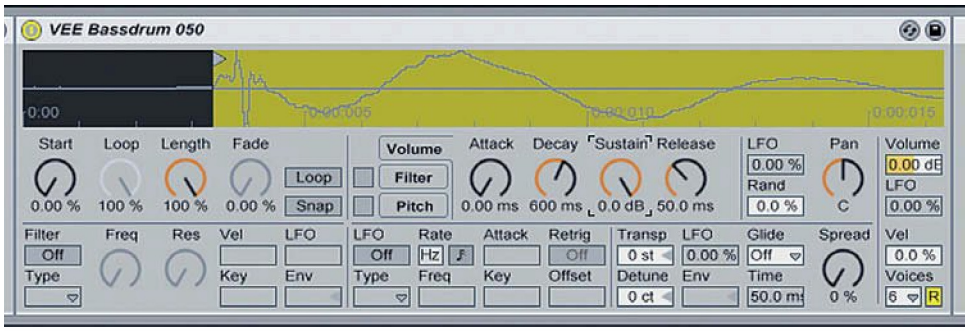
Step 1. Find three kicks you really dig. I chose three from Vengeance (vengeance-sound.de) Electro Essentials: "Bassdrum 009" for its basketball-like quality, "Bassdrum 028" for its overall thickness, and "Bassdrum 050" for its all-purpose, classic sound.



Step 2. Create three separate samplers, each containing one of your selected kicks, and give each its own track. In Ableton Live, create a single Instrument Rack that contains a Simpler for each layer. To keep organized, name each sampler based on the kick inside – I used "Basketball," "Fatness," and "Classic."

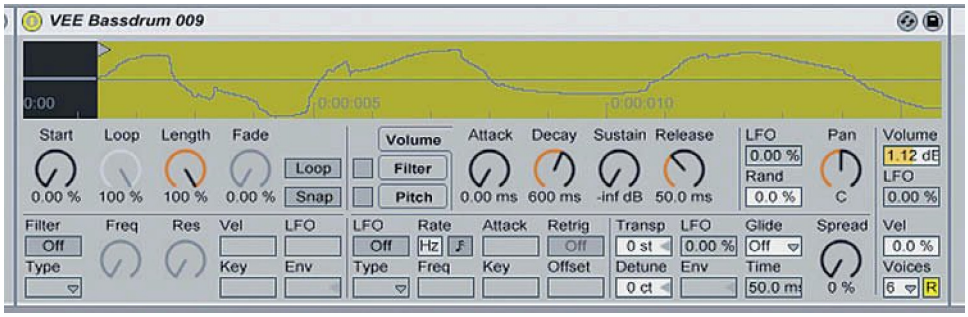


Step 3. Create a one-measure, four-on-the-floor loop for each track. Be sure to make the note length a full quarter-note for each event, so the kick isn't truncated by a short event duration. If using Live, create a single one-measure clip for the channel containing the Instrument Rack.



Step 4. Loop and play all three tracks. Listen closely for any flamming. With three kicks going at once, there's a good chance that their attacks may not line up. Some libraries crop their samples right on the attack, whereas others leave a little room for the producer to touch up manually. In the latter case, go into your samplers and adjust the start time for each kick by hand. Here's an edit in one of our Instrument Racks' Simplers.

Step 5. Now we're ready to start blending. Begin by muting one of the three kicks in your layered collection. Then try another, and so on. From there, try adjusting the levels of each kick to create different mixes. As you do this, pay close attention to the low end. A little intermodulation between low frequencies is inevitable; just make sure you don't introduce an unpleasant wobble (due to phase cancellation) by combining two closely related kicks. Here, good monitors or headphones are your friends.



Step 6. For more sophisticated blending, tinker with the envelopes of each sampler. If you like the attack of one kick and the body of another, start by soloing the "attack" kick, then reduce the sustain level to zero, so that it decays. Next, adjust your decay so that you're only briefly hearing the attack. Now, add your "body" kick and adjust its level in relationship to the other. Spend a bit of time tweaking the volume and envelope for each kick until you get it right.

Step 7. To really punch up your mixed kicks, apply some dynamics processing to the entire chain. If you're working with separate tracks in your sequencer, route all tracks to a single bus, then apply your processor. If you're in Live, add the processor after the instrument rack. One of my favorite tools for getting a really punchy kick is PSP Vintage Warmer. Slapping this at the end of a chain and increasing the drive can really glue everything together.

Listen to audio samples and share your thoughts on the "Da Funk" patch for Alphakanal Automat at keyboardmag.com, and download this patch at celebutantemuic.com/keybmag.

DAFT PUNK'S "DA FUNK"

by Mitchell Sigman

In 1997, French synth-house duo Daft Punk burst onto the dance scene with the infectiously hooky four-on-the-floor jam "Da Funk." It's such a simple tune that it could almost be a nursery rhyme if it weren't for the radically distorted synth lead drilling its way through the entire track. It's tough to say what synth originally produced it, because the sound is dominated by resonance and distortion, so we'll nail this sound in the soft synth world.

We'll also make it easy for you to get in on the fun by using the cool freeware synth Automat from Alphakanal. I have to admit, I'm pretty blown away by Automat – with three oscillators, dual filters with multiple modes, and built-in effects, this slick little synth can easily hold its own with the paid-for synths you often see me using in this column. Get it at blog.alphakanal.de.

1. At its most basic level, this patch consists of two sawtooth waves tuned a perfect fourth apart, so select saw waves for oscillators 1 and 2.
2. Using the Coarse oscillator tuning control on oscillator 2, tune it up a perfect fourth (five half-steps) from oscillator 1.
3. Make sure the volume of each oscillator is fully up in the mixer section directly to the right of the oscillator bank. You can leave oscillator 3 off by setting its wave to off, or by turning down its volume in the mixer section.
4. Now we'll set the filter. Automat has two filters; oscillator 1 routes to filter 1, oscillator 2 to filter 2. Since we want the same filter settings for both oscillators, Automat includes a little "dash" between the two filters. Click it to lock the two filters' controls together.
5. Set the filter type to BP2, which is a two-pole bandpass. Be sure to experiment with the different filter settings later – they all sound great!
6. Set filter Cutoff to nine o'clock, Reso (resonance) almost full up, Env (envelope amount) at about one o'clock and the filter envelope controls at the following "o'clock" values: Attack at eight, Decay at one, Sustain at eleven, and Release at one. See the screenshot for precise values.
7. Moving on to the amp section, simply set Sustain full up and Release halfway up; everything else can stay at zero.
8. Now we'll use the shaper/filter section (labeled "S-FL" on Automat's panel) to grunge it up. You can experiment with settings, but I set Mode to "shaper," Shape to "silicon," Bias halfway up, Drive almost all the way up, and volume all the way up. Dirty!
9. Select "chorus" from the pop-up menu in the CHO section and dial to taste; try not to go too nuts. Note that my mix control is only about one quarter of the way up.
10. Finally, set the keyboard mode (a drop-down menu all the way to the right) to mono. I also knocked the master transpose down an octave to C1.

That's all. Make sure to play around with the filter cutoff and envelope amount to see how minor tweaks radically affect the tonality of the distortion.

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PATINO'S PLATINUM PLUG-INS

by Jon Regen

Juan Patino is a quadruple threat. The Grammy-nominated, multi-platinum producer, mixing engineer, singer-songwriter, and instrumentalist has been one of New York City's busiest and most sought-after sonic sorcerers since producing and engineering Lisa Loeb's monster hit "Stay" rocketed him to international success in 1994. He and Loeb racked up three studio albums and five Billboard Hot 100 singles. Since then, artists as diverse as Jewel, Eric Benet, Chris Stills, Avenue B, the cast of the Tony-nominated Broadway musical *Rock of Ages*, and countless others have sought out Patino's studio sheen, crafted in his Manhattan facility, 52nd Street Digital.

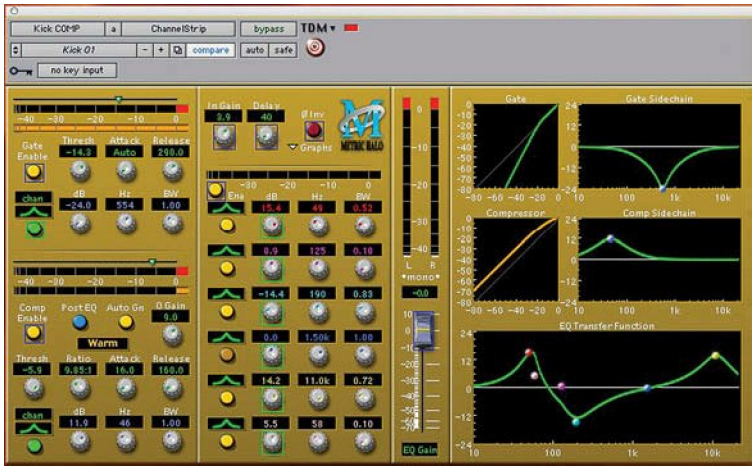
Patino, who spends most days and nights camped out at a Pro Tools HD3 rig, shared some of his best production tricks with us. Below is an overview of his go-to plug-ins (plus one toy keyboard!) for different instruments in a contemporary pop mix. In the online version of this story at keyboardmag.com, you'll find video clips for each tip in which Juan goes into detail about the plug-in settings. Prefer brief, before-and-after audio examples? We've got those, too. k

Tip 1. Using EQ and dynamics on the main mix.

For fattening his mixes, Patino often inserts the Channel G EQ/dynamics plug-in from McDSP on his master stereo fader. It helps increase overall mix depth, providing good control over the bottom end and helping to add air to the high end. As you'll see in the online video, he goes for about 2 to 3dB of low boost, and adds 1.5dB between 12 and 13kHz to achieve the air.

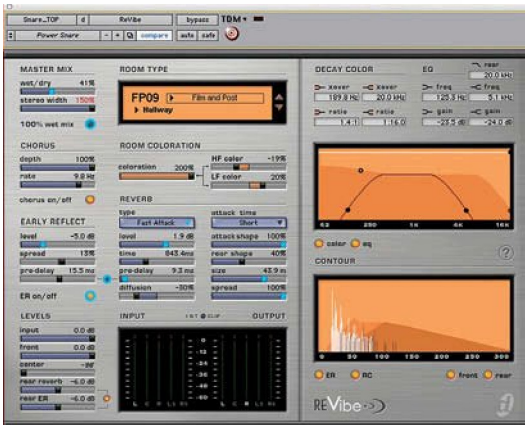
Tip 2. Adding punch with a loudness maximizer.

A permanent fixture in all of Patino's mixes is the Waves L3 Multimaximizer plug-in, as the final insert on his stereo master fader. It adds perceived loudness to the mix while keeping any disruption of the overall dynamic range to a minimum. In the online audio and video examples, he demonstrates his exact settings and shows us a before-and-after comparison using the song "Romeo" by all-female trio Avenue B.



Tip 3. Treating the kick drum.

Drum sounds are what separate an ordinary mix from a slamming one. In the online examples, Patino inserts Metric Halo's ChannelStrip plug-in on the kick track, and shows the settings he makes to transform a rather "dull, flabby" kick into something with a lot more low-end chest thump and top-end click.



Tip 4. Treating the snare drum.

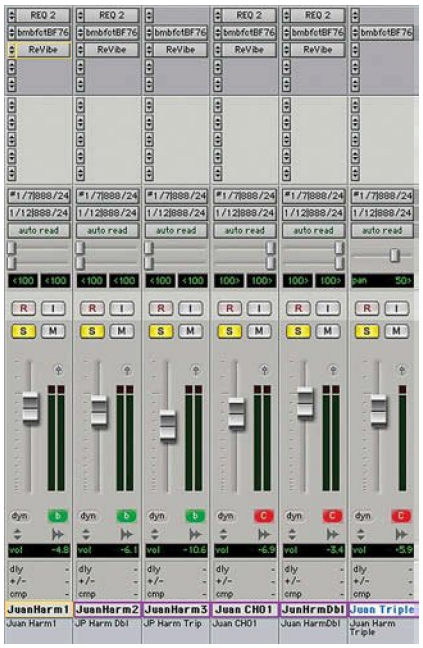
On the snare track, Patino layers EQ, compression, and reverb, courtesy of three stacked plug-ins: Metric Halo ChannelStrip, McDSP MC2000, and Digidesign ReVibe. Notice how in before and after examples online, the newly fattened, wider snare drum cuts through the mix more crisply, yet still retains most of its original sonic character. You can also see his settings in the screenshots for MC2000 (left) and ReVibe (right).

Tip 5. Unique sounds from unlikely sources.

Patino regularly searches for sounds outside the sonic box, often with the help of garage sale and toy store finds. In the online examples – these from a recent TV commercial he scored – Patino uses a child's Casio keyboard he picked up in a Tokyo toy store to create an aural footprint all his own.

Tip 6. Sculpting a software piano into a rock track.

Patino relies heavily on Synthogy's Ivory piano plug-in, taking full advantage of its onboard ambience and EQ settings. In the online video and audio examples, Patino demonstrates how adding slight reverb and rolling off Ivory's upper frequencies helps to warm and settle the piano comfortably into his mix of a tune he just co-wrote for a new singer on Atlantic Records.



Tip 7. Building vocal harmony stacks with aggressive panning.

In this frequently-used Patino trick, he builds a sonic bed of ear candy around the track's lead vocal. The first harmony vocal part is tripled in tracks 1 through 3, then panned hard left, followed by the contrapuntal 2nd harmony part also tripled in tracks 4 through 6, then panned hard right. Each track has its own highpass filter from Waves' Renaissance EQ 2, followed by a Bomb Factory BF-76 compressor, then Digidesign ReVibe reverb for a dreamier sound. Again, see the online audio and video for detailed settings and before-and-after comparison.

Tip 8. Creating a conducive studio environment.

Perhaps Patino's most heavily-used studio tip is "Don't be a jackass!" He elaborates: "Create a peaceful and stimulating environment for the creation of cool tracks.

As a record producer, I try to operate from a place of humility and a heightened sense of compassion. Making music for a living is a deep privilege. Work hard to make the studio a playground for harmony and invention. Oh, and laughter. I've found that comedy seems to be the universal language between songwriters, musicians, and singers. Always keep a lot of laughs on tap – *they came for the sound, they stayed for the comedy.*"

To download a Combinator patch that plays a complex beat, go to keyboardmag.com. Got Reason patching tricks to share? Click on "Forum" and let us know – you could wind up in the magazine or on our site!

MODULAR PATCHING IN REASON

by Jim Aikin

The control input and output jacks on the rear panels of the virtual rackmount devices in Propellerhead Reason make it a full modular sound design environment. But older Reason modules, such as Subtractor and Malström, have only a limited set of control *inputs*.

What if you're already using a Subtractor's first LFO to control something, and you need an external LFO (or even the same LFO) to control, say, the Mix knob or Filter 2 Resonance? There are no rear-panel inputs for these parameters, and Subtractor's front panel only lets you send an LFO to one destination. The trick is to use Reason's Combinator module, which lets you send control signals to *any* parameter. In the steps below, we'll show you how. The online song shows how I like to modulate stuff in different devices – panning in a mixer, the P1 knob in a Scream, and wet/dry mix in a DDL-1 delay – using a single LFO.

One caveat: Modulation signal routings in Reason are monophonic. If you use a Subtractor as a mod source, only the envelopes and LFO from the first of its voices will go out its virtual jacks.

Step 1. Create a Combinator and put a Subtractor in it. This will be the sound source, so name it "Sound Src." Reason will automatically patch its audio output to the Combinator's From Devices input.

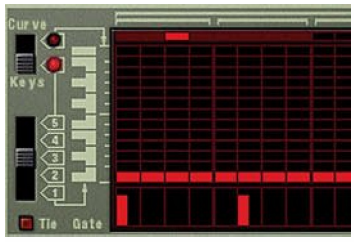
Step 2. Create a second Subtractor as a modulation source, and name it Mod Source. Make sure its Polyphony is set to 1, and activate the Low Bandwidth switch to save a little processing power.

Step 3. Flip to the rear panel using the Tab key. Patch the LFO output from Mod Source into the Rotary 1 input on the back of the Combinator. This makes the LFO signal available to anything in the Combinator.

Step 4. Click the Combinator's Show Programmer button and select the row for the Sound Src device. Use the pop-up menu by the Rotary 1 Source to select whatever parameter you want to modulate.

Step 5. If desired, add more modulation destinations by selecting Rotary 1 as the Source. Adjust the modulation depths with the Min and Max settings.

Step 6. Edit the LFO rate and waveform in Mod Source to create something tasty, such as a synced square wave for a rhythmic pulse.



Step 7. For more complex rhythms, gate the Mod Source from a Matrix Pattern Sequencer, set up a Matrix pattern, and patch the envelope outputs of the Mod Source into the Combinator's Rotaries.

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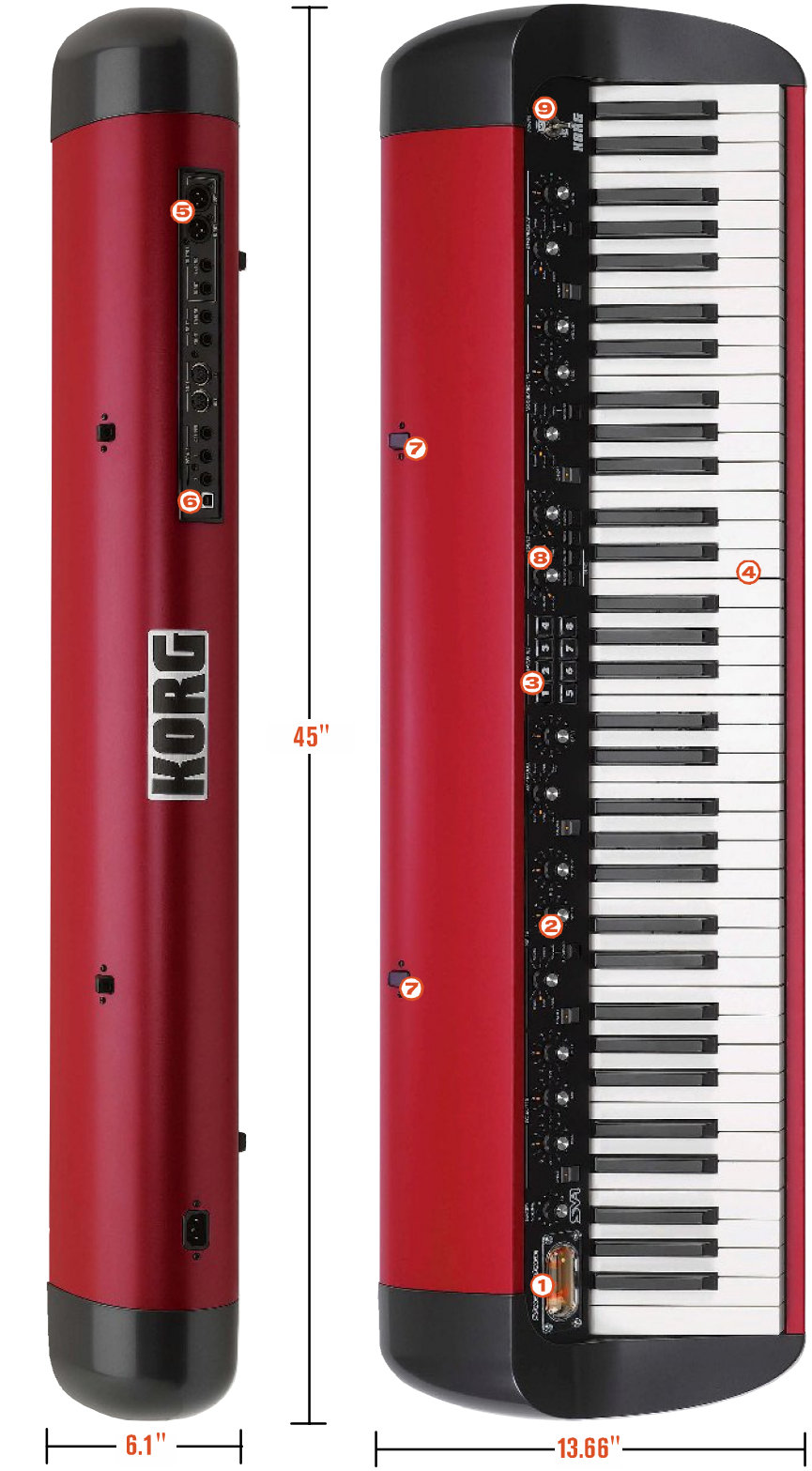
KORG SV-1
Ultimate Vintage Keyboard Simulator?

by Tom Brislin

Tried the Korg SV-1? Rely on a different axe for your vintage keys? Leave a comment on this review, or join the forums, at keyboardmag.com.



PROS

Top-shelf emulations of many vintage sounds. Adjustable Real Experience technology adds realism. Lots of front panel control. Excellent effects with realtime control. XLR outputs in addition to 1/4" jacks. Reasonably portable, yet rugged. Smooth integration with editor software for deeper programming. Release velocity used effectively. Looks really cool.

CONS

No aftertouch. Keyboard action doesn't return quickly enough for rapid-fire repetition. Headphone jack placement leaves connectors vulnerable to breakage if bumped.

INFO

73 keys: $2,700 list/approx. $2,000 street; *88 keys*: $3,000 list/approx. $2,200 street,
korg.com

HANDS-ON

1. A 12AX7 tube is always backlit, but only used when one of several amp modeling effects is active.
2. Gorgeous front panel has a wealth of knobs (many of which are also buttons which can be pressed to return levels to their original values).
3. Eight Favorites buttons provide quick access to a customizable set of sound programs. Tweaked up a cool custom setting? Save it immediately by holding a favorites button and clicking when the number light blinks. Reminiscent of a car radio.
4. Korg's RH3 weighted action is found on both the 73- and 88-key models.
5. Balanced left and right XLR outputs and unbalanced 1/4" outputs can be used simultaneously. For mono use, go with the left 1/4" output.
6. USB port connects the SV-1 with a PC or Mac as both a MIDI interface and to talk with the included editor software.
7. Need a music stand? It's included, and it attaches here.
8. Six categories of six sounds each are here. Using the editor software, you can save new sound programs to any location.
9. The finishing "vintage" touch: an old-school toggle power switch!

Have you heard? There's a new keyboard. It specializes in great vintage sounds. It's red. The name of the company has four letters in it, with an "or" in the middle. That's right, it's from Korg. Bet you didn't see that one coming. But chances are you will be seeing and hearing the striking and stylish SV-1 on a stage near you. Korg has made bold claims to have the most faithful reproductions of the most classic vintage keyboard instruments in the SV-1. Does it have what it takes to excite the most discerning vintage keys fans, and the mojo to find its way into your heart and onto your stage? Let's find out.

SOUNDS

The most important aspect of the SV-1 is the sound. Korg calls the overall technology "Enhanced Definition Synthesis" (EDS). Each sound has two aspects: the multisample, and a "Real Experience" component. The Real Experience elements are extra artifacts that you'd find in a vintage keyboard: key click, release sounds, pedal noises, and the like. You can adjust the level of these for each sound that employs it, from none at all up to comically clunky. There's a sweet spot between reality and practicality that is easy to attain.

The first category, "E. Piano 1," is a series of presets that employs an astounding multisample of a vintage Rhodes electric piano. It sounds like a Mark 1 Stage model, and oozes vibe, with lots of dynamic variation. The voicing of the Rhodes used in the sampling session is one that brings out plenty of "bell" in the tone. While you can't "voice" the sound per se, I was able to tweak the EQ, velocity curves, and built-in effects to get a variety of Rhodes flavors, from the schmoozy '70s ballad, to the nastier, aggressive, more "Herbie-esque" tones.

They also nailed the Wurlitzer 200A Electric Piano, which, like the original, has even more dynamic variation in the tone depending on how you play (and which velocity curve you choose). While playing the Wurly presets, I discovered that the SV-1 has a way of not just sounding but *behaving* like many of the instruments it emulates, thanks in part to Korg implementing release velocity. This is employed very tastefully and subtly, and there are sounds that *will* behave differently depending on how quickly you release the keys. This translates to a more realistic experience, as many of the real instruments recreated here do in fact respond differently to how you release the keys.

The SV-1 is also replete with acoustic piano sounds. There's a Yamaha concert grand, a Steinway concert grand, and an upright. More than an afterthought, these can stand up against most hardware digital pianos, provided you run them in stereo. There's also a specific mono version of the Steinway grand, intended for those gigs where you're forced to run in mono.

For those who wonder why a dedicated monaural piano is best in such situations, piano samples often "thin out" when using a single mono output. To add even more substance to the sound, the envelopes are set to a long sustain and slow decay. This does expose a noticeable loop point in the sample that detracts from the realism, though it likely won't be detectable in the context of a loud band onstage.

Living up to the "vintage" in its name, the SV-1 includes Hohner Pianet, RMI Electra-Piano, Roland RD-1000, Korg's own SG-1D sampled grand, and a really warm-sounding Yamaha CP-70 electric grand.

The SV-1 also gets some serious Clav on – all four pickup settings found in the original Hohner D6 and E7 Clavinets are on hand, and the Real Experience artifacts truly capture the release effects, even the reverberation if you "slap" the low end. If you play staccato funk, or if you engage the Vox wah emulation (which is addictive, especially when run through one of the amp model effects), you might think you're listening to the real deal. On two of the Clav sounds, I did notice that when holding sustained notes, the looped phase of the sample kicks in fairly quickly, but you're unlikely to hear this in the context of live playing.

Pleasantly surprising were the high-quality Hammond-style organ sounds. They're sample-based, and don't have realtime drawbar control like a dedicated clonewheel organ, so I was getting ready to dismiss them. I'm glad I didn't, because they performed admirably. There's even a scanner vibrato/chorus with all six of the settings (three depths each for vibrato and chorus) found on a B-3. The Leslie simulator is decent, though not the most authentic available when compared to clonewheels such as Korg's own CX-3. It's no surprise that cool Vox and Farfisa patches let you cover everything from "Break On Through" to "Rock Lobster." What is a surprise is that Korg sampled *the* Lowrey organ belonging to Garth Hudson of The Band. The result sounds halfway between a B-3 and a pipe organ – and all the way huge.

Last but not least is a "miscellaneous" bank, in which my favorite are the orchestral

NEED TO KNOW

What are the best vintage sounds in it? The Rhodes, Wurlitzer, and Yamaha CP-70 electric grand are standouts. Special bonus points for the orchestral strings, which are very inspiring.

Why would I gig with this instead of a workstation/ROMpler/all-purpose keyboard? For starters, most workstations with weighted keys weigh considerably more than either flavor of SV-1. With the front-panel controls, ease of use, attention to sonic detail, balanced XLR outputs, and yes, the cool look, you may be swayed.

Can I play multiple sounds at once? The SV-1 is a one-patch-at-a-time keyboard, so don't expect key splits or layers in the usual sense. However, individual sounds do have separate elements (*e.g.* the piano/pad layers) you can blend using the front-panel controls.

What's the real polyphony? Stated polyphony is 80 notes. Some sounds yield less depending on how many elements they have. I never encountered any note-robbing or awkward cutoffs, even if playing rambunctious piano with lots of sustain pedal.

Is it worth the money? With the 73-key model hitting the stores at around $2,000, this is a premium instrument, with heavy-duty design and pro vibe through and through. It's neither the cheapest nor the most expensive stage piano out there, so it's a question of whether or not you fall in love with it when you play it.

strings. Mellotron strings are on hand, as are phasey ARP ones for that Jean Michel Jarre sound, a stabby choir (think Depeche Mode's "Enjoy the Silence"), and synth brass stacked in Minneapolis-funk octaves.

VALVE REACTOR

Speaking of the real tube, we've seen one grace the front panel of Korg's Triton Extreme series, and the SV-1 sports one as well. The similarities end there, however. Unlike Korg's previous "Valve Force" technology, which had the tube acting more or less as a preamp you could drive hard, the 12AX7 tube in the SV-1 works as part of what Korg calls "Valve Reactor" technology. The difference? Here, the tube is exclusively employed by the various (and very detailed) amp simulations, and works towards emulating the actual power stage of each amp, rather than merely providing "tube overdrive." The amp simulations are punchy, provide a lot of sonic variety, and can be tweaked more extensively through the editor software.

IN USE

Both SV-1 models use Korg's RH3 weighted action. The feel is substantial, with a nice amount of resistance, and provides a decent dynamic response (each preset can have one of seven velocity curves, plus there's a fixed velocity setting well-suited to organs). It's graded, which means that lower notes have more resistance than the higher notes. It feels great, but didn't quite ace my "Billy Joel test," in which fast sixteenth-notes are played machine-gun style on the same key, the way Billy does in "Angry Young Man" and "Scenes From an Italian Restaurant." The keys didn't quite yield the rapid-fire repetition that can be achieved on a real grand or high-end digital piano.

The front panel is one of the sweetest dashboards to come along in some time. Aside from the conversation piece that is the backlit tube, there is a very logical and elegant arrangement of knobs for controlling the various aspects of a preset. The knobs feel great, and many of them are also buttons; pushing them

Innovative.

innovative (\i-no- va-tiv) adjective: having the skill and imagination to create new things [*syn*: creative] *See Wright's Reprints*

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THE SV-1 EDITOR

The SV-1 ships with included editor software (Mac/PC) that looks and behaves like a part of the instrument itself. When connected via USB, anything you change on the SV-1 is immediately reflected in the editor, and vice versa. In the editor, you can tweak effects parameters (such as deeper stuff about the modeled amps) that aren't available on the front panel. You can also save and load new preset programs. Korg says you can "load new sounds" to the SV-1 via the editor, but let's be clear: You can load new program data based on the existing internal waveforms, but not sounds based on new or imported samples. Unlike Korg synths such as the MicroX and R3, whose editors can run as a plug-in so you can automate them from your DAW, the SV-1 editor is a stand-alone affair, which is an understandable choice given the SV-1's focus on live gigging.

returns the corresponding value to its original setting. There are eight Favorites buttons, which are clear and convenient. Have more than eight favorites? Not to worry – you can save any sound to any preset location using the editor software.

With a groovy array of buttons and knobs so close to the keys, it's easy to accidentally hit one when playing your heart out, like when I inadvertently engaged wah-wah on a piano sound and later unwillingly changed from a piano to an organ. Fortunately, Korg says they're working on a panel lock function for a future OS update.

All in all, I found the realtime controls and their layout *very* useful and fun onstage. The effects are very strong, and they beg to be tweaked. There's even a tap-tempo button for the delay, though I wish it worked with the "tape echo" effect as well.

We should mention the schlep factor, which is favorable. Any player eyeing a live performance keyboard will be paying attention to portability. The SV-1 73-key model weighs 38.5 pounds, while the 88-key model sneaks in at 45.3 pounds. Korg has struck a nice balance between portability and ruggedness, as the build of the instrument is roadworthy and inspires confidence. Korg will be unveiling rolling soft cases for both models, which will help keep transport a one-person job.

CONCLUSIONS

The SV-1 strongly appeals to musicians who don't want to get bogged down in complexity, but rather just get playing. This is truly a player's instrument, but isn't short on features either. Most of the sounds are home runs, and the effects are very musical and rich. It's a heavy-duty, pro 'board but still reasonably portable, and it makes a bold visual statement. For the cash, we lament the lack of aftertouch and split/layer ability, but applaud the high level of sound and build. It can be your only keyboard for band gigs that call for piano, electric piano, and Clav, and the organ sounds are good enough to get you through your R&B covers, if not a full night of organ-centric music. For gigs that require multiple sounds at once, it's a stellar "bottom keyboard" – add a 61-key synth or workstation on your upper tier (and maybe a dedicated clonewheel if your music is B-3-intensive), and you have an enviable dream rig. More importantly though, how different and how detail-oriented the SV-1 is will inspire you to play in a way that a more do-it-all instrument may not – and turn more than a few heads in the process.

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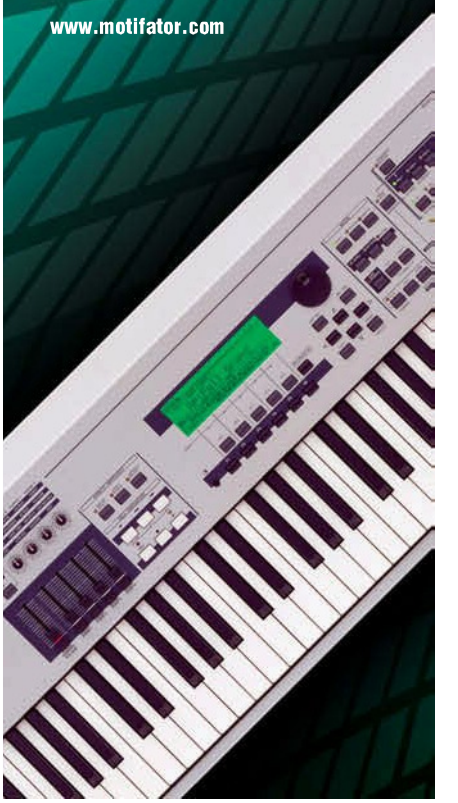

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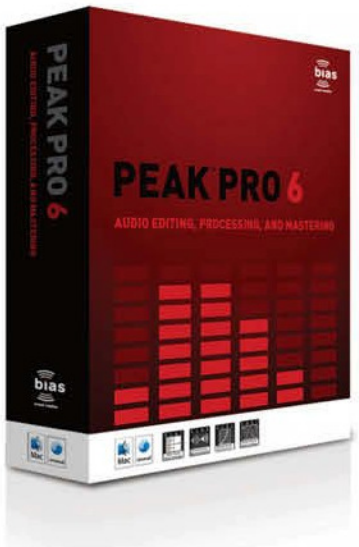

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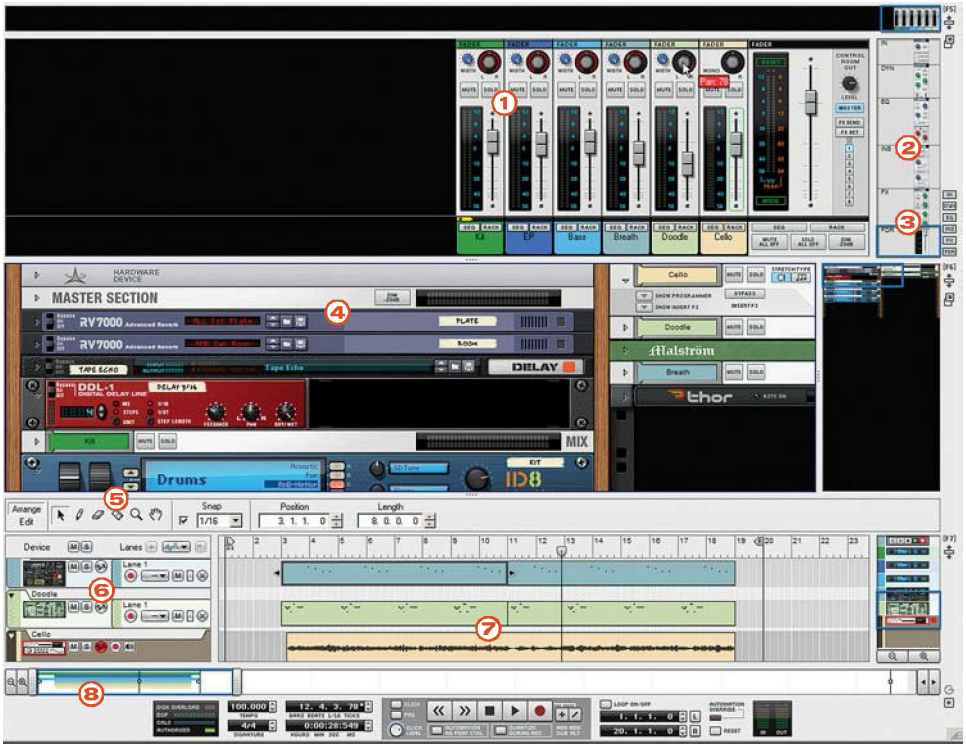


What's in your Reason/Record rack? Let us know on the forums at keyboardmag.com!

PROPELLERHEAD RECORD

A Reason to Record Audio

by Jim Aikin

PROS

Seamless integration with Reason. Excellent mixing and automation. Superb time-stretching of audio. Don't have your dongle? Not a problem.

CONS

Doesn't host third-party plug-ins. No audio pitch correction. No video features.

INFO

$299 list/approx. $250 street; $149 for current Reason owners, propellerheads.se

Do you crave a tightly integrated and user-friendly music production environment, or do you need a program that will do everything? Unless you have an unlimited budget, it's a tough choice. If you prefer tight integration and ease of use, Propellerhead's new Record software is aiming right at you.

TWO KINDS OF USERS

For current Reason owners, Record is a powerful step forward. Record does audio multitracking, which eliminates the need to run Reason alongside a DAW via ReWire, save separate files for the two programs, and so on. Reason and Record integrate seamlessly, all of Reason's virtual instruments becoming instantly available in the same rack as Record devices. Your Reason chops will get you up and running with Record in almost no time, and you'll be able to use Reason devices' virtual CV outputs to modulate Record's insert effects in all sorts of stimulating ways.

Record will also attract band musicians who aren't necessarily Reason users, but who want to lay down multitrack audio without getting lost in complexity. Record's mixer looks and feels exactly like a big hardware console (it was modeled closely on an SSL), audio recording is as easy as it ever was on a tape deck, the included effects are high-quality, and the full-featured audio track editing and automation are just what the doctor ordered.

On its own terms, Record succeeds brilliantly. However, a few functions musicians may want or need are absent. Like Reason, Record doesn't host third-party plug-ins. The synths included in Reason have plenty of power, so Record-plus-Reason users won't miss anything unless they need a drawbar organ or a specialized, modeled synth such as Arturia Brass. Propellerhead and third-party ReFills (these aren't plug-ins; they're sound packs for Reason devices) provide hosts of sounds including synths, vintage keys, orchestral instruments, and loops, but nothing in the piano department competes with a program like Synthogy Ivory. Record's effects are more than good enough for sweetening your tracks, but you can't host third-party plugs for stuff you may care about – say, convolution reverb or pitch correction – though you can certainly ReWire Record into a DAW and host those plug-ins there.

All this said, I found Record a joy to use. Here's why:

LAYOUT

Record's main window is sensible and easy to get used to. There are three main work areas: mixer, rack, and sequencer. Your F5, F6, and F7 keys show or hide them in any

HANDS-ON

1. The mixer expands to the left as you add tracks.
2. The channel strips have so many features they're too tall to view completely.
3. Grab the blue rectangle in the mixer thumbnail to scroll up or down to the control sections.
4. Record's rack houses synthesizers, effects, and mixer channel access modules.
5. Standard editing tools (move, pencil, razor, etc.) are here.
6. Sequencer tracks have the usual mute, solo, and automation display controls.
7. Clips containing audio and MIDI data live side by side in the sequencer.
8. A thumbnail display lets you scroll and zoom horizontally in the sequencer.

NEED TO KNOW

What is it? A multitrack audio recorder that stands on its own or integrates seamlessly with Reason.

So I can use Reason's soft synths in it? If you have Reason installed, they'll show up right in Record's familiar-looking (but expanded) rack.

What effects are included? Reverb, distortion, guitar amp models, delay, chorus/flanger, EQ, compression, stereo imaging, and audio maximizing.

How easy is it to write automation? Go into record mode, grab a knob or slider, and move it. All automation data is fully editable.

Can I record multiple takes in loop mode? Yes. They'll show up in multiple sub-lanes for that track.

Can I track a whole band at once? Up to 64 simultaneous inputs can be recorded, if you have enough inputs on your hardware.

Maximum audio resolution: Up to 24-bit/192kHz, depending on your audio interface.

Does it export MP3 files? Nope. But you can export any audio clip or as a WAV file, which you could then convert to MP3 in another program.

Copy protection: An either-or system (hardware dongle or online password) makes life easier.

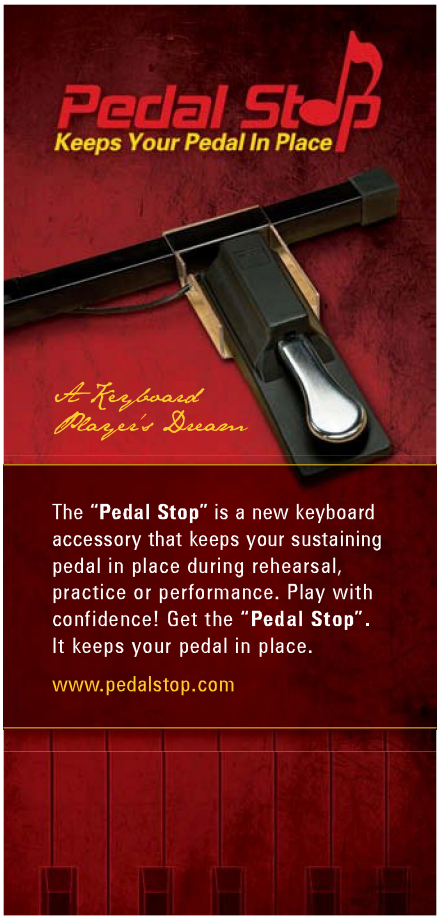
combination. Usually you only need to look at one at a time, so screen space is not an issue. In place of scrollbars, Record uses navigation thumbnails, which take up a little more room but make it much easier to find devices and parts of tracks in a complex environment. The detach button for any section pops it into its own window, but unless you have two or more displays, using the F5, F6, and F7 keys is better. Reason's rear-panel graphical patch cords are retained, but in Record, you can also position several racks side by side.

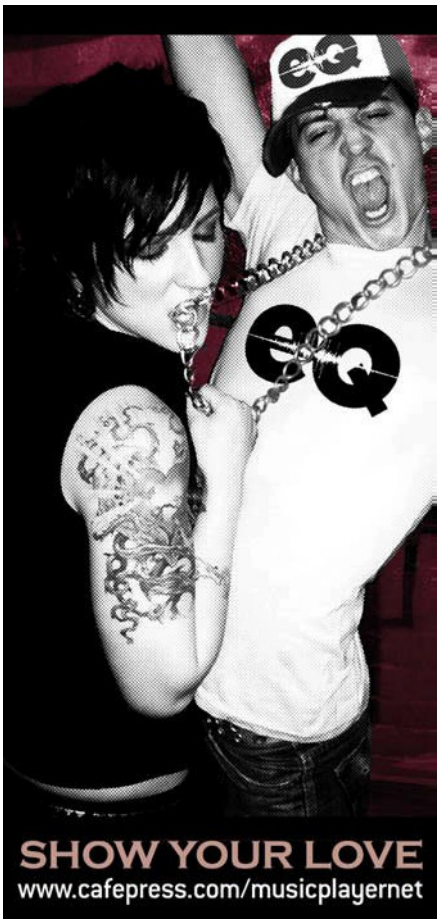
The Mixer module from Reason is on hand for submixing, but it's now subservient to the all-new Record mixer. When you create a synth in the rack or record a new audio track, a mixer channel device is added to the rack. A difference from Reason is that here, no visible patch cords run from the rack to the mixer itself. Instead, instruments are patched into the channel devices that live in the rack. What's extremely cool about these devices is that they're based on Reason's Combinator module. Each has four Rotary knobs with rear-panel CV inputs, space to add insert effects, and a programmer panel for assigning rotaries to insert parameters. They also have CV inputs for volume and pan control, plus a sidechain input to feed the corresponding mixer channel's compressor.

The mixer itself (see Figure 1 on page 60) has six sections: input, dynamics, EQ with four bands plus high- and lowpass filters, insert controls, aux sends, and a fader area. For a detailed overview of what's in each section, read this review at keyboardmag.com.

One of the coolest features in Record's mixer has to be the handy little buttons labeled SEQ and RACK. These bring up the sequencer track or rack device corresponding to the mixer channel, which smooths workflow considerably. Another nice extra is that the insert setup for a channel strip can be saved or loaded as a preset.

The mixer's master section has its own compressor – an homage to SSL's hallmark bus compressor – which can glue a mix together nicely. There's also a separate control room output, which you can patch to any physical output. As with any large board, the Record mixer is a bit intimidating at first glance, but it's nicely





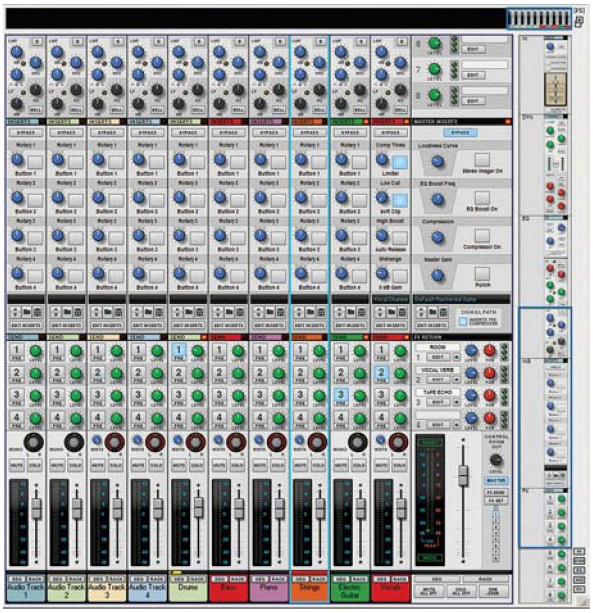


Fig. 1. More of Record's mixer can be seen when detached in a separate window. Top to bottom: part of the EQ, macro controls for the inserts, insert setup save/load buttons, sends, faders, and meters. You can show different areas by moving the blue rectangle, and show or hide each area.

laid out and has exactly the controls you need for precision mixing.

TRACKING

Tracking with Record is about as easy as can be. Create an audio track, choose an input, decide on mono or stereo, and click the big red button. You can turn the metronome and countoff clicks on or off as desired. No need to select a folder to record audio to – in fact, you can't. All of your tracks are stored in the same big file as the rest of the song. You *can* decide where this project file will live, *e.g.* on your audio drive as opposed to your system drive. The one-file approach greatly simplifies archiving and sharing songs with your friends.

If the transport is in loop mode, you can record a number of takes without stopping. Comping a keeper by slicing up takes is very nearly painless – just grab the razor blade tool. You can adjust the levels of individual takes so that they match, slide the audio forward or backward in time, and so on.

Record can change the tempo of recorded audio with amazing fidelity. After recording a cello solo, I soloed the track and found I could boost or drop the master project tempo by as much as ten bpm without affecting the cello's tone or rhythm in any way. A few very quiet pings were added with this much tempo shift, but nothing that wouldn't be masked completely by the rest of the tracks. The fact that you can settle on a tempo after tracking is extremely convenient.

Since pitch correction involves code that's not too different from time-stretching, it's a good bet that Propellerhead is planning to add pitch correction in a future version of Record. At the moment, your only option in case of pitch problems in a vocal or solo instrument track is to bounce the recorded track to disk as a separate file, correct it in another program, and re-import it. Fortunately, this is easy. To fix a few out-of-tune notes, I used the freeware audio editor Audacity, which can pitch-shift short regions within a file.

OTHER FEATURES

A couple of minor gripes I've had about the sequencer in Reason 4 are addressed in Record. When notes are dragged up or down in the edit view of a MIDI clip, they now send audible MIDI notes to the corresponding synth, which makes editing much easier. And if you click-hold on the zoom-in or zoom-out button, the zooming will continue – you no longer need to click again and again.

New effects include a pair of amp/cabinet simulators from Line 6, one for guitar and one for bass. Users who have a Line 6 USB audio interface (with its associated software) hooked up can load more simulations, but I found the included five each of amp and cabinet models to be inspiring. The guitar amp has inputs, which can be MIDI- or CV-controlled, for volume and wah-wah, and

the bass amp has a compressor.

Record's copy protection gives you two ways to work. Registering online will authorize the included USB dongle. If you lose or forget your dongle, you can enter your Propellerhead password online to get authorized on a one-off basis. In fact, you can record an entire multitrack session with Record in demo mode, with neither the dongle nor Internet access – but after saving the session, you can't open it again until your copy of Record is authorized.

Fig. 2. Two of the new rack modules in Record: ID8 preset synth and Line 6 Guitar Amp. The Mix module at top connects the ID8 to the mixer using invisible patch cords.

If you don't own Reason and all the cool soft synths that come with it, Record's new ID8 preset synth (see Figure 2 above) is extremely useful. It's not programmable, other than via a pair of knobs that make various tweaks depending on the current preset. The 36 presets are in nine categories – piano, electric piano, bass, strings, percussion, and so on. They all sound plenty good enough for pro-quality songwriter demos. ID8 responds to pitchbend and mod wheel moves, but unlike Reason instruments, has no rear-panel CV input jacks.

RECORD ALONE

Without Reason, Record gives you more than half of the effects you may want. The RV7000 reverb is included, as are the Scream 4 distortion module and MClass mastering effects (EQ, stereo imager, compressor, and maximizer). However, you won't get the BV512 Vocoder or the phaser. The Matrix pattern sequencer and RPG-8 arpeggiator require a copy of Reason, but fortunately the ReGroove mixer is included in Record itself. Without Reason, Record is short of modules to generate CV (virtual "control voltage") signals, but Scream has an envelope follower output and the MClass compressor has a gain reduction CV out.

CONCLUSIONS

Too many times, I've had plug-in issues in my DAW. Most were minor and quickly resolved, but some glitches inevitably remain. So Propellerhead's decision to steer clear of third-party plug-ins makes sense: You use the program and it just works. Some plug-ins are also CPU hogs, but because Propellerhead is in control of *all* code that runs in Record, they can optimize theirs to let you pile up more instruments and effects. The trade-off, of course, is selection, and whether it's an acceptable one is a question each musician will answer for him- or herself.

If you don't own Reason, consider the combined Reason/Record package ($629 list/approx. $500 street). There's a lot in it to like. At this price point, though, Reason-plus-Record has some stiff competition: Logic Studio on Mac, FL Studio 9 on Windows, and Ableton Live 8 and Pro Tools M-Powered 8 on either. Record's lack of a video window, a feature found in many DAWs, will be a negative if you want to do a soundtrack or dub a recorded mix into your band's video. But if you want to track and mix songs quickly, with a minimum learning curve and a bunch of proprietary soft synths that have stood the test of time at your fingertips, the dual package is quite attractive.

If you already use Reason and don't have (or want) a DAW, Record adds the audio recording you've always wanted and will lift your musicmaking to a whole new level. You'll love the seamless integration, the visually impressive, handles-like-an-analog mixer, the Line 6 guitar amp models, and the assorted user interface improvements. Then there's the price for registered Reason users: $149. That makes it a virtual no-brainer. k

GALBANUM
ABSTRACTION 04
Mathcore Meets Hooky

by Jason Scott Alexander

PROS
Powerful, glitchy, club-ready beats. Highly original. Well-organized. Per-format pricing saves money as you only buy the format you use.

CONS
Limited kick and snare variety.

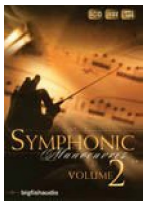
FORMATS
Acidized WAV, REX2, Apple Loops.

INFO
Base: $39.95*; additional formats:* $14.95 each, *1,024 single hits:* $14.95
galbanum.com

Andrew Souter's name may be familiar to owners of Metasynth and various Native Instruments products, for which his single-cycle waveform coding played a major role in preset development. A fan of using precision math and investing hours of meticulous sample-level editing to create his rather distinctive source material, the *Abstraction* series is a growing collection of quirky, polyrhythmic beats that are practically textures unto themselves. This fourth installment sees TR-era analog kick and snare loops paired with "found sounds" loops and other tasty oddities, clearly targeting producers of experimental hip-hop and electro-urban music.

Arranged in folders of 160 kick, 160 snare, 400 percussion, and 320 full mix loops, files are each two measures in length and have been produced at a native tempo of 106bpm. I found that they time-stretched very well between 85 and 130bpm, making each element suitable across a wide range of styles, from club to downtempo. Essentially the same 808 kick and snare combo is used throughout, varying in pattern, velocity, and modulated pitch, but not tonally. Spice comes from the exciting loops of wave-shaped pots and pans, pseudo-organic finger snaps and claps, clicks, scrapes, knocks, zaps, gongs, and other incidental sounds. It's like a master class in stutter theory and glitch sound design.

What's really cool is how the individual percussion samples (which you can purchase separately) have been spatially processed for sounds that leap from the speakers. This produces loops which are very active in the stereo field while keeping perfect silence in between hits. It also makes dropping in single hits a piece of cake. And while the mix loops are laden with reverb and delay, the solo kick and snare loops have thankfully been left completely dry, letting you arrange, slice, and otherwise edit them without worrying about effects trails. k



BIG FISH AUDIO
SYMPHONIC MANOEUVRES 2
Musical Screenplays Aplenty

KEYBOARD KEYBUY AWARD

by Jason Scott Alexander

PROS
Wonderfully "expensive" Hollywood sound and performance quality. Instrument sections all recorded in complete isolation. Close and far mic tracks provided.

CONS
None to speak of.

FORMATS
Acidized WAV, Apple Loops.

INFO
$99.95, bigfishaudio.com

Soaring strings, blasting horns, airy woodwinds, and explosive percussion are what *Symphonic Manoeuvres* is all about. Picking up nicely where the original left off, Volume 2 delivers the same high-quality, key-grouped, cinematic construction kit-type fare, but with greater flexibility. This time, instead of grouping multiple instrument types as pre-mixed beds, each section has been recorded in total isolation so you can remix or rearrange the parts as you see fit. What's more, you get both room and close-miked recordings of each section – a really nice touch.

While only ten construction kits are provided, they're massive (3GB total) and cover tempos ranging from 80 to 165bpm. In each you'll find a nearly two-minute demo mix of all elements fully arranged, with discrete instrument parts broken out as shorter (up to eight-bar) phrases, plus intros and endings – all told, typically 60 to 90 sample files per kit. Stylistically, things lean heavily towards dramatic action/chase, celebratory, and mystery/suspense scenes. In the lead-off kit, a tremolo strings and woodwinds swell evokes *Mission: Impossible*. In another, scurrying strings and pulsating synth bass and drums conjure up a neo-gothic streetscape. In another, a Gregorian male choir, backed by powerful brass and cymbal-crashing orchestration, marches to a militant snare in triumphant gladiator fashion. They all gave me goosebumps.

The bonus "Choir Chords" folder is a nice treat. Sung in the keys of *D*, *E*, and *G* and including various alterations and augmentations, 23 different chords are each held for about ten seconds. More special still is the gorgeous "Orchestral Drones" folder, containing not just your typical brooding strings and flatulent horn sections, but an entire cinematic soundscape of piano, celeste, harp, and percussion – such as bell tree, wood blocks, gongs, bowed saw, and thunder drums – presented in buildup through climax. Key Buy-winning value! k

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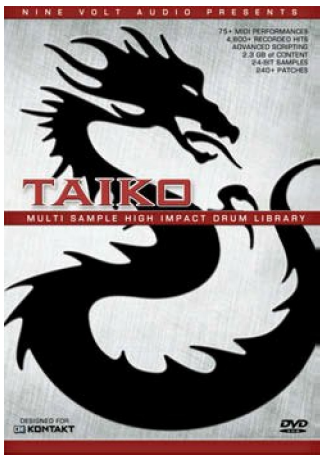

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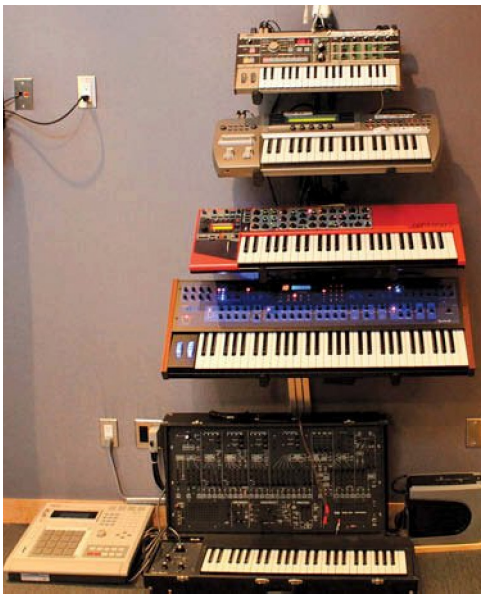
CRYSTALWERKS

In last month's feature on the Crystal Method, the electronic mega-duo talked about their newly-built dream studio. These photos arrived a hair too late to be in that issue, so when we saw them, we knew they had to be this month's Geek Out! Stephen Fortner

Top to bottom: Korg MS2000B, Nord Lead 2, Roland Juno-106 and Jupiter-6, M-Audio Axiom Pro controller, Linn 9000 drum machine.



Top to bottom: MicroKorg, Korg Prophecy, Nord Lead 3, Dave Smith Poly Evolver, ARP 2600, Akai MPC2000.

Central island, clockwise from front: Open Labs MiKo, Elektron MonoMachine, Korg MS-20, FutureRetro XS synth, Memorymoog, Elektron SidStation.

Oxford OSCar atop Roland Juno-60.

Top to bottom: Yamaha CS-40M, Roland Jupiter-4, Moog Source, Korg Mono/Poly, Roland JP-8080 and SH-101.

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